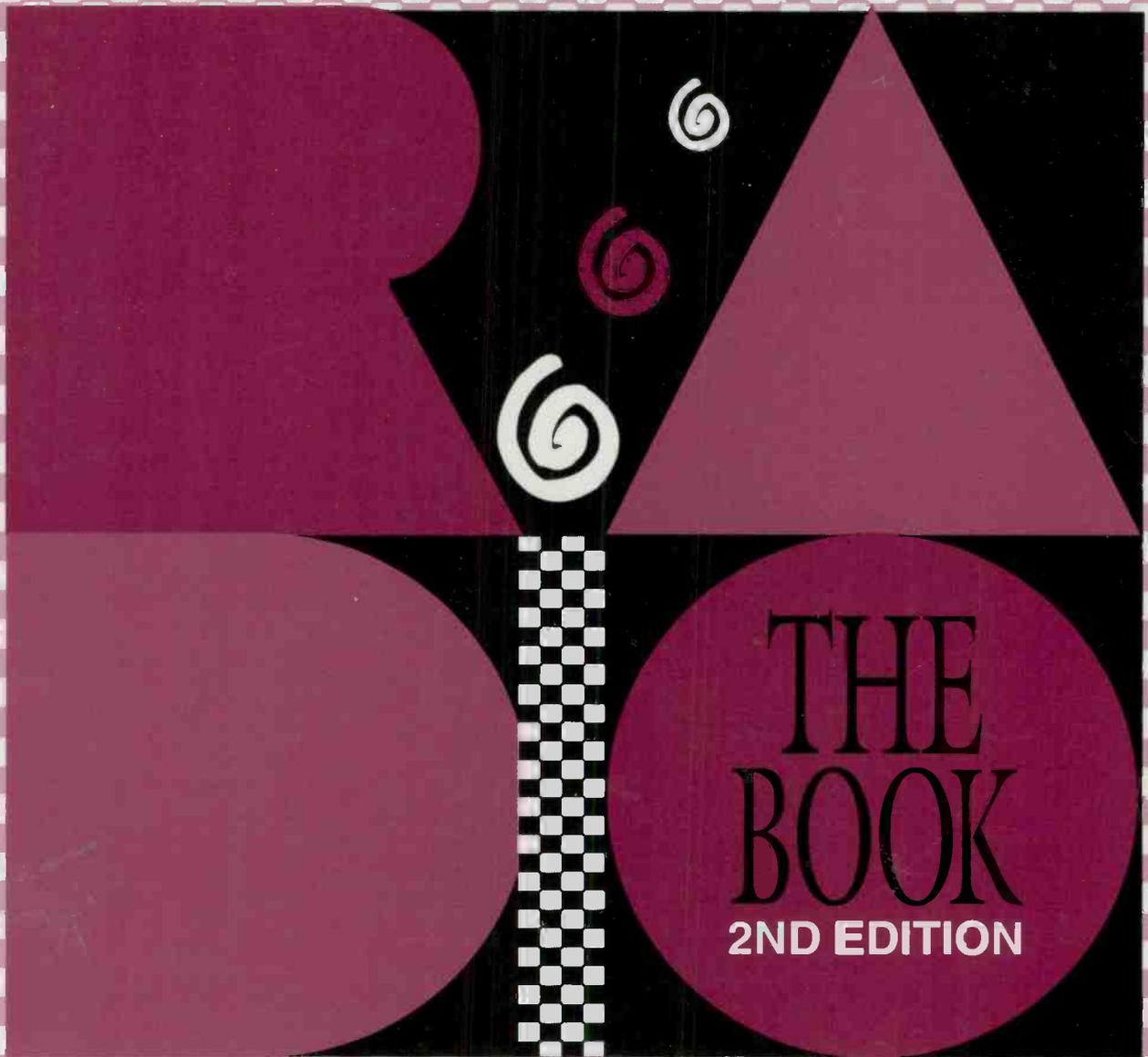
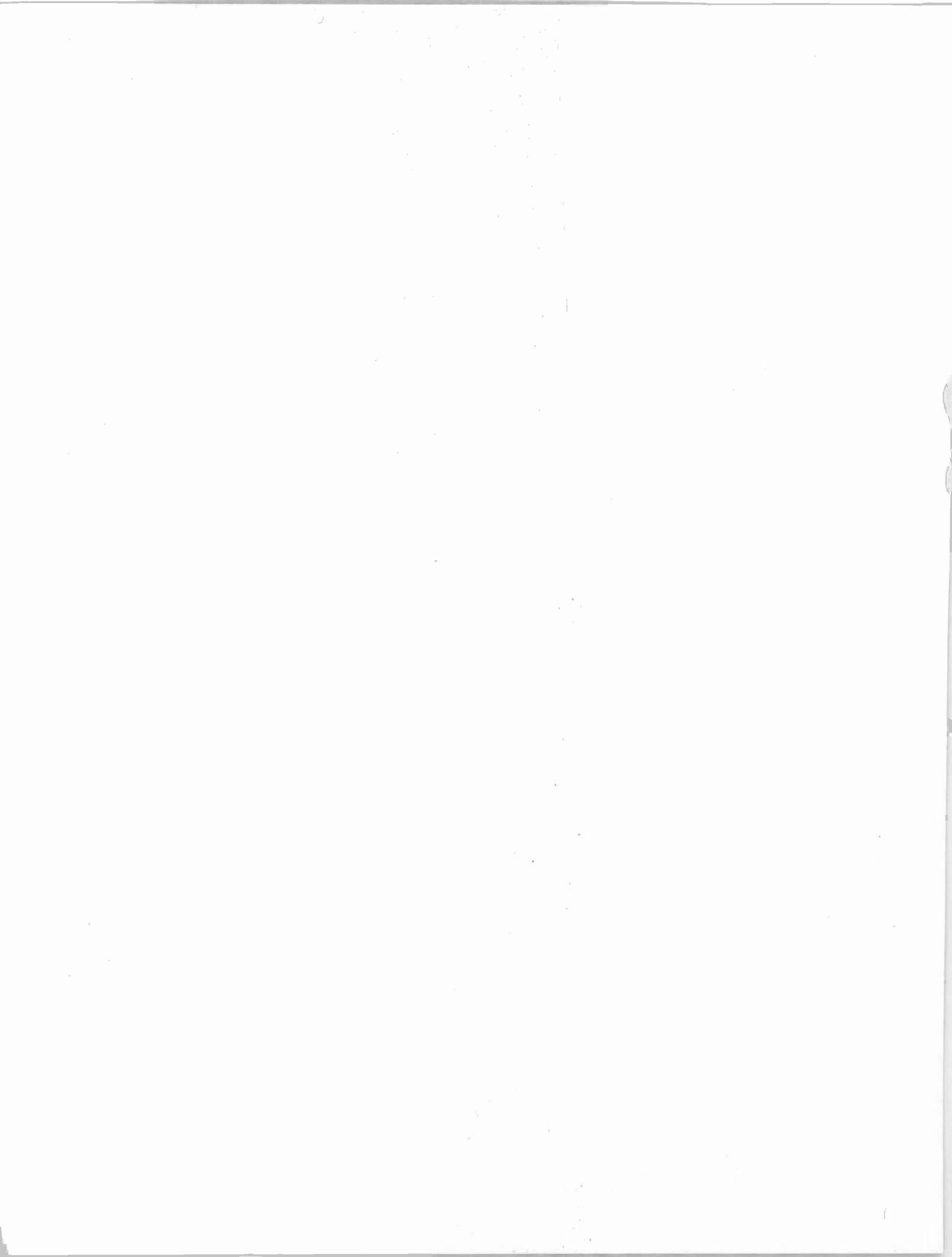


NABTM
BROADCASTERS



*A Fun, Practical, Programming Manual
and Idea Book for Program Directors
and Operations Managers*

By Steve Warren



RADIO: The Book

2nd Edition

*A Fun, Practical Programming Manual and Idea Book
for Program Directors and Operations Managers*

By Steve Warren

National Association of
NAB[®]
BROADCASTERS

RADIO: The Book

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National Association of Broadcasters

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RADIO: The Book

“*Radio: The Book* reveals tips and secrets nobody tells you about. Because there are few training materials available for radio programmers, *Radio: The Book* is a valuable resource for new and experienced PD’s.”

--*Update, National Association of Broadcasters*

“Warren’s book covers every aspect of radio management and programming, including rotations, dayparting, promotions, and advertising...”

--*Billboard Magazine*

“Consultant and veteran programmer Steve Warren has written a textbook-style introduction to the industry with some of its basic principles...devoted to various aspects of programming, ratings, research, advertising, and promotion.”

--*Radio & Records*

“...a basic and personalized approach to building a career in radio...a compelling reference...”

--*Radio World*

“In this book, Steve has racked up an enormous amount of experience that he freely, skillfully and most entertainingly shares with his readers.”

--*The Monitoring Magazine*

“...very useful in the daily fight for ratings...very helpful for managers of (German-International) commercial radio stations.”

--*Medium Magazin for Journalists, Germany*

About The Author

With a broadcast career spanning over 35 years, Steve Warren has competed successfully in all music formats from Country to Urban, Easy Listening to Rock, MOR to Classical, and at some of America's most prestigious radio stations including: WNBC, WNEW, WHN, WYNY, and CBS Radio in New York as well as WDAE, Tampa; WIRE, WGEE and WIFE, Indianapolis; KNBR, San Francisco; WPEN and KYW, Philadelphia. In recent years, he has Programmed WPTR, Albany; KKYX and KTSA, San Antonio as well as WING, Dayton, all rising to significant numbers under his skillful stewardship.

Son of a Louisville, Kentucky radio personality and part of a broadcasting family, he has excelled as an on-air personality, actor, magician, writer, performer, and radio station Program Director.

The storehouse of experience he has acquired along the way has taken him into a new undertaking as Broadcast Consultant and Owner of **MOR Media & Country Company**. He established MOR Media to provide other broadcasters with the know-how to mount an aggressive pursuit of the Mature demographics which are becoming such a powerful factor for future radio stations. Primarily **MOR Media & Country Company** specialize in Adult Standards and Classic Country formats but also include any adult format.

With this book, Steve shares his tips, secrets, and unlimited knowledge for the first time. Every chapter (including the importance of going on vacation) is jam-packed with canny, creative, witty, solid basics...plus that extra "juice" nobody ever tells you about. Not since The Nuts and Bolts of Radio in the 1950's has a broadcaster written such a usable handbook for beginner or veteran. It's thirty-five years of hands-on experience in about 200 pages. When he's not travelling to one of his member stations or attending broadcast related seminars and conventions all over the world, Steve Warren lives in New York with a good friend and a couple of bad cats.

Ruth A. Meyer



Dedication

To all of the people whose lives have touched mine in creating the millions of building blocks of Radio Programming. I'd particularly like to thank all the wonderful people who found it in themselves to give me the latitude I needed to be creative. I'd also like to pay tribute to all the jerks in the business who taught me how to "not" do it. Finally, to Paul Siebold, who pushed me over the hump to finish this project in the first place.

Except in cases of biographical reference, any resemblance to radio stations or persons mentioned in this book to actual persons (living or dead), or radio stations (present and past) is purely coincidental (but you know who you are).

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Introduction

Why write a book? Early in the 1970's when I was working at my first New York City radio job (WPAT), I had lots of time to think about where I was and how I got there. It seemed like a quantum leap from a high school station in New Albany, Indiana (WNAS) to being on the air in the top radio market in the world. At that time I thought I would put pen to paper and document how I made the journey. It took about a year of inconsistent effort to finally put together what amounted to a collection of anecdotes and stories I'd accumulated for about 10 years. I called the collection "Floaters, Drifters, and Prima Donnas" after the somewhat less than respectful opinion held by some radio station owners referring to announcers. Although sharing the stories with family and friends and printing a few dozen copies of the book, it was apparent that it was not yet time for writing memoirs.

It's all perspective. When I thought that finally getting a job on the air in New York was the zenith of my career, I soon discovered that it was not the end of an upward professional climb, but the beginning of another series of goals and achievements. Those following years on the air in New York and then my PD jobs taught me many lessons about major market thinking and politics. I also became more acutely aware of the enormous stakes at risk in big market radio and the incredibly talented people who participated at that level, both on the air and in management.

In 1980, following the collapse of WKHK's attempts to be New York's FM Country Music station, I grew very weary of being a pawn in the game plan known to only a few corporate officers. I also felt that as long as I stayed on the air full-time, I was pigeon-holing myself as air talent, doomed to following the direction of others and finding little audience for my own thoughts and opinions. By this time, I had worked for a radio network, been in country music, News-Talk, Top 40, M.O.R., Classical, Adult Contemporary, Urban, Easy Listening, ...and several dozen other broadcasting circumstances which defied identification formatically. When I accepted my first major market PD job at WPTR in Albany that year, I really turned the corner professionally in terms of fulfillment. WPTR started a string of programming success stories which have continued to this day and have been the most gratifying experiences of any in my career.

I also noted the stickers on my luggage and which states and cities I had called home for greater or lesser periods of time (depending upon the level of accomplishment). I was delighted to have "conquered" several legendary stations including some of the big 50,000 watt AM giants heard across America. The cities and stations included:

Kentucky	Louisville- WKLO, WTMT, WLRS, WLKY/TV
Indiana	Indianapolis- WIRE, WGEE, WAIV, WIFE, WISH/TV, WTLC; Corydon- WPDF ; New Albany- WNAS, WOWI ; Elwood- WBMP
Delaware	Wilmington- WAMS
New Jersey	Millville/Vineland- WMVB ; Paterson- WPAT AM-FM ; Camden, WCAM ; Newark- WNJR
New York	New York City (three times)- WHN, WNBC, WRFM, WKHK, WNWS, CBS, WNEW, WYNY, WNCN, WAXQ ; Poughkeepsie (twice)- WKIP ; Albany- WPTR (twice); White Plains- WFAS AM-FM ; Long Island- WHLI
California	Los Angeles (twice)- Unistar Radio Network ; Long Beach- KFOX ; San Francisco- KNBR, KNAI
Florida	Punta Gorda- WCCF ; Sarasota (twice)- WSPB ; Tampa- WFLA, WDAE ; Port Charlotte- WEEJ
Pennsylvania	Philadelphia- WPEN, WSNI, KYW ; Chester- WEEZ
Texas	San Antonio (twice)- KKYX, KTSA
Illinois	Chicago- WCLR
Ohio	Dayton, WING

In most cases, I became a resident of the city in which I was working. In others, I worked only temporarily but spent enough time in the market to make friends and get to know the town. Concurrently with regular jobs, I did "call-letter collecting" whereby I knew friends or acquaintances at other stations where I was permitted one courtesy shift or guest appearance. In one form or another (live or syndicated), I've been "on" over 200 stations.

With the experiences I've shared over the years, radio has become a hobby as well as a career. When I turned toward programming full time, I felt like I opened a door to far greater opportunity than ever before, able to call upon unused portions of my background to apply to new and challenging situations. I discovered that working through others was an even far better expression of my ability than exclusively working through my own talents. As I stepped from being on the air to being part of management, I felt that finally my opinions could matter and that ideas and concepts that had fallen on deaf ears for years would see the light of day (how's that for a mixed metaphor?). It also was most gratifying to work with younger, less experienced announcers and share with them the knowledge and tricks necessary to move their careers ahead. Sitting on the other side of the desk also gave me far greater insight into the management viewpoint of station operations.

The over-riding theme of how I choose to program a radio station is a combination of "sharing" and "avoidance therapy". I never at any time in my announcing career was convinced that program management fully shared information with me that made me feel a part of the team. With the possible exception of Ruth Meyer during my years at WHN or Edd Neilson at WGEE/WKIP, I felt it was a "them versus us" atmosphere in most stations. I was expected to perform in a certain way and respond in an established manner, but was never told why. It was like there were deep, dark programming secrets that only PD's could know and radio as we know it would cease should those secrets escape to the air talent.

I found PD's almost paranoically possessive of their programming treasures and unwilling to share them. These "secrets" ranged from how Arbitron worked to exactly what the station goals were we were trying to achieve. Conversely, as I began my programming career, I found quite the opposite to be true. The more information and knowledge I shared with my staff, the smarter they were and became greater assets. They even became a new resource in devising new strategies and better understanding of the direction of the station. They were a viable part of the body of knowledge necessary to make it happen, rather than beasts of burden. I also found that by training and sharing duties, responsibilities, and strategic information with other staff members, I could personally move on into more creative areas within the station, no longer having to do everything myself.

On the philosophy behind avoidance-therapy, the many years of small, medium and large market radio I had experienced had permitted me to witness some unbelievably stupid, uncaring, selfish, immoral, and wasteful behavior on behalf of management toward programming staff. Although I haven't found the stomach to enumerate them, I am sometimes reminded of the really insensitive things that I saw being done to those people around me and even to me, personally. I made one of those "under my breath" vows that if I was ever in a similar position, I would never treat my subordinates in such a manner. I've seen firings, warnings, humiliation, demotions, criticisms, lies, false accusations, deceitful conduct, theft, and mental persecution perpetrated upon employees.

I am fully aware that there are necessary unpleasant things that one must do in management-employee relationships, but I will seek to avoid doing them the way I have seen them done in too many instances.

The sheer volume of information I've learned, picked-up, or stolen is just too great to keep to myself. Now I'm consulting a variety of stations so I can pull from an even greater range of my past experiences to identify with my client's needs. During my years of programming Country, my knowledge of Top 40 or MOR music went unused. With Oldies, I had little use for the News-Talk experiences I had acquired. It's as though I have a file drawer open to every format available for sharing with other broadcasters.

Now, there's no more tucking away years of experience, but constantly using the information, refining it and adapting it to new situations. In the interest of sharing and in being consistent with my overall programming philosophy, it's time to put into a usable, easy to understand formula the methods and systems that work for me. Each station and company has its own set of guidelines and rules to follow. I don't expect the material contained herein is for every circumstance and fits every station, format, or opportunity. It might best be utilized as a "fall-back" point, list of basics, idea book, encyclopedia for thought starters. In the First Edition, some of the chapters were narratives on thinking and philosophy, others are lists of ideas, quotations, and proverbs. In this Edition, I have expanded many of those philosophies to include many additional thoughts as suggested by readers of the First Edition and some new material covering issues more prominent now than just a few years ago. All of which, hopefully, should make the thought processes begin to work toward solving your programming situation. It is my intention that "RADIO: The Book" will become part of your arsenal to stay fresh, creative, and competitive in your market and your career.

This is not a history of radio, there's lots of books written about the "Golden Age" of radio and the history of the medium. This is a chronicle of how one person sought answers and applied them. There is a real shortage of training material and opportunities for radio programmers, partly due to the lack of sharing as previously mentioned, partly because of the ever-changing nature of the business itself and mostly because most programmers are just too busy programming to focus on a time-consuming literary project. Were it not for avid note-keeping, this work would not have been possible. This book almost wrote itself over the past several years. The programmers of tomorrow will come from somewhere. It is my hope they will evolve from their own creativity tempered by the knowledge shared by some of us who've "been there".

Chapter 1: Let's Get Started

The focus of this book primarily is Programming. That is the product which we sell and where the creative process is called upon to generate profit-making ideas. As we mentioned in the very beginning of the book, there has been so little previously written about Programming, that the information is almost conspicuous by its absence. Programming is the key element of broadcasting, but you'd never know it by browsing the Radio-TV section of a bookstore. Since Programming is only limited by lack of creativity, it would probably be presumptuous to outline iron-clad rules and regulations about what works. If Programming were merely a formula, then we could dispense with this whole book and put the formula on a single hand-out sheet. In reality, because Programming is so wide open from station-to-station, the best I can hope for is to stimulate the creative process and hope that many of these ideas I have found to be successful can be adapted to someone else's needs and situation.

Industry organizations such as the Radio Advertising Bureau can provide considerable quantities of valuable information regarding Radio Sales. In fact, the selling of radio advertising, though unique, does call upon basic selling strategies from other businesses and acquires a considerable number of personnel from retail and other sales-related occupations.

Although we'll re-visit these areas, I thought a few comments about some miscellaneous topics would be appropriate.

SALES

It is often said that the real money in radio is in Sales. Probably so...for people who enjoy selling. However, I don't think many people enter the business initially without some interest in a specific job. I really don't think anyone enters radio primarily for the money, in any department. It's a special business, combining an assortment of people in the development of an uniquely personal product. Announcers, air talent, or whatever term is selected, are actually salespeople, too. They sell the radio station's benefits to the listener. They sell themselves at personal appearances and they sell their ability to perform to management on an ongoing basis. The account executives who represent the Sales Department operate in a more structured environment and work with ratings, budgets, costs and contracts, and they also operate as an adjunct to other businesses that wish to get the word out about their products and services.

In many cases, there are announcers who are looking for more stability in their lives, enjoy their community, have families and want to stay where they are. There comes a time when the salary for announcers just can't go any higher. The more-money aspect of Sales is not the salary itself, but the option to make commission. Therefore, within Sales their earning power has no set limits. There always seems to be a small percentage of radio account executives who have come through the ranks of Programming. Their decisions to do so are largely personal and usually the result a conscious career-move.

The occasional adversarial relationship between Sales and Programming often results from misunderstanding and working at cross-purposes.

From the Sales point-of-view, calling on clients, making promises, asking for the order, being in and out of a car all day, are all part of their difficult and under-appreciated job. They often think announcers have it pretty easy doing a four hour shift in a studio, especially for a guaranteed salary, which is often rumored to be greater than their own.

From Programming's side, Sales people are responsible for station income, directly affecting studio equipment purchases or salaries. Sales gives the station away too cheaply and makes unrealistic, short-notice, demands on announcers and Production people in developing commercials. They also want the Program Director to put material on the air (like promotions and air-cluttering, low-value contests) for the sake of making a sale. Like brothers and sisters, there are frequent spats between Sales and Programming, but they ultimately need each other. That truth usually mitigates any problems between the two departments and prevents disputes from becoming too serious. It should be the goal of a good general Manager to have frequent meetings between these two important departments. The manager should continue to restate the goals of the station -- the proper parameters and guidelines for expected performance. There should be effective systems or operational procedures for handling inter-departmental affairs.

TECHNOLOGY

The minute I start writing about anything technical, the shelf-life of this book is reduced by 75%. Radio technologies are re-inventing themselves by geometric progressions. In the field of music reproduction alone, we've gone from vinyl record to tape cartridge to Compact Disc to Hard Disc to CD-ROM to (heaven knows what next) in just a decade. We are knocking on the door of new distribution technologies which still include FM, AM, AM Stereo, AMAX, direct satellite, DAB, and beyond. I see things at broadcasting conventions these days that I have never dreamed of...but I don't see some of the things I saw last year because they are already outdated.

People don't listen to the radio because of its technology. We massively overestimate the technical knowledge and/or concern our listeners have for what goes on backstage at a radio station. Radio listeners have endured a lot of problems over the years, straining to hear out-of-town stations, inferior signals, low power, interference, and scratchy records...and yet they remain loyal and generally uncomplaining. If we have something technical that really matters to a listener, then promote it (such as higher power, greater coverage, AM Stereo), give demonstrations, get radio dealers involved, make something out of it.

Similarly, the Technical aspect of radio is probably the most widely published information. Each week/month/year there are piles and piles of technical journals, newsletters, and magazines, keeping the engineering department busy trying to stay current with emerging technologies. Because there are over 10,000 commercial radio stations in the United States, each in a varying state of technical operation, we can safely assume that just about every type of technology exists within American radio. Whether your audio sources are cart machines or hard-disk, turntables or CD players, reel-to-reel or cassette...what matters most is how effective you are in attracting and retaining listeners. For simplicity, I decided to take the low-tech approach in describing techniques and examples. If your radio station is more toward the high-tech end of the spectrum...great! Just adapt the ideas to your situation.

A radio station's technology is the tool to accomplish the goals. The secret is not in the sharpness of the tool, but rather, in the ability of the craftsman. Regardless of the prevailing technology of radio, at the delivery end there is still programming. We have to create something worthwhile and profitable to deliver by whatever means. The technical aspects of broadcasting are merely the tools we are given to do our work. Many truly great radio stations have become legends and made millions of dollars with the most basic of tools. For decades, radio was ruled by AM MONO stations playing vinyl records broadcast by tube transmitters. The music was scheduled with cards and the program log and commercial copy was written on a typewriter, a description still accurately defining hundreds of small market stations. Let's take the tools we are given in any situation and use them as best we can, but let's never find ourselves in a position to blame our tools for our own lack of imagination.

Technology is also the most mystical department of the radio station, since few people from other departments possess the skills and training necessary to be an effective broadcast engineer. For this reason, some engineers have absolute control over matters of selecting equipment, installation, and significant budget allocations. Most good engineers are team players and enjoy the same sense of job fulfillment as other members of the staff. It is not unusual, however, for many engineering decisions to go un-questioned by management and other department heads. Since most stations have only one full-time engineer, I strongly suggest using an independent outside engineering consultant once or twice a year, just the same as a Programming or Sales Consultant. Broadcasting engineering is an occupation that depends extensively on personal preference for types of equipment, manufacturers, installation procedures, etc. Bringing in other choices from the services of an Engineering Consultant (who sees a lot of other radio stations and has a more inclusive knowledge of available technology), may save the company time and expense, well worth the fee.

Chapter 2: Radio Is A Secondary Medium

When radio stations first went on the air in most major American cities during the early 1920's few people had radio receivers. Listening to the radio became almost a community event with neighbors, family, and friends all converging on the homes of those fortunate enough to possess a radio receiver. Then, all would gather around the radio and listen, or literally stare at it, while the programs were on. The radio set commanded the same focus of attention that today's TV sets do. Since radio was still a scientific and technical wonder, the commercial and money making benefits remained somewhat unexplored in the early days. The way to make money then was to sell radios. This explains why some of the early pioneer broadcasting companies were actually primarily in the electronic radio manufacturing business. Companies like Westinghouse, General Electric, RCA, Crosley, and others built and operated radio stations in order to sell more radios.

Radio was a **primary** medium in those days. There was no TV and radio was a collection of individual short-form programs. Some daily features were only 5, 10, or 15 minutes long. Weekly features were most often 30 or 60 minutes long. The time dedicated to listening to the radio depended upon which programs were favorites and when they were on, in which case you planned other activities around listening to them.

"Listen" was the word, too. The radio comedies and dramas demanded attention. News broadcasts with up to the minute information from around the world deserved and received uninterrupted attention, not passive indifference. Work schedules, family chores, school homework, even civic activities or meetings were rearranged to permit time for listening to the favorite radio programs.

Motion pictures were also a **primary** medium, requiring actual attendance at the theatre, a financial investment and time budgeted around the movie schedule. When Television started to happen in the late 1940's and then exploded in the 1950's, the movies came into the living room and the radio programs got faces. Gradually, radio personalities and motion picture stars defected to opportunities in Television, leaving radio stations across America with diminishing audiences and scrambling for ideas.

You can tell I'm skipping over a lot of radio history here, since this is not a history book. Any library will have a variety of books on the history of radio. Let's just say that radio evolved from a "program" medium into a "format" medium. Radio established itself as an outlet for playing various types of music around the clock and/or providing supplemental programming to that offered on TV. As radio stations adopted music formats, the way people listened to radio also changed. Now it was possible to listen to the radio at anytime of the day or night without having to give it undivided attention. Radio became more of a companion than entertainment. In undergoing this metamorphosis, radio became a what we refer to as a **secondary** medium. This is not a bad thing...in fact it saved the industry.

Today's radio has almost become completely redefined as a secondary medium. By secondary medium, I mean that at the moment listening takes place, in a majority of cases, the listener is engaged in some other primary activity. This becomes very important in programming radio stations.

To clarify "Secondary Medium" here are examples:

- Driving the car: Driving is the primary,
 listening to the radio is secondary
- In the kitchen: Preparing food is the primary,
 listening to the radio is secondary
- At the office: Doing work is the primary
 listening to the radio is secondary
- The bathroom: Shower, shave, or whatever is the primary
 listening to the radio is secondary

Clear enough? It seems that whenever a radio is being played, the listeners are doing something "else" which requires primary attention. Knowing "what listeners do and when they do it" for their primary activity can be very valuable in programming to them. It also helps us understand why radio stations need to exercise considerable effort in getting their message or identity across, since the impact on the listener is reduced by the importance of their primary activity. From being a secondary medium has come the theories of reach and frequency schedules (sales folk love 'em), repetition of spot announcements, over-selling station image lines and contest rules, music rotation patterns, announcer scheduling, and commercial rates. Radio has also been the ally of other advertising media in playing a supporting role in developing a multi-media approach to successful advertising campaigns by reinforcing images simultaneously promoted via TV, billboards, Cable, newspapers, etc.

Chapter 3: The Radio Station and What It Is Supposed to Do

Who and what you are determines the purpose of a radio station. For example:

A STATION OWNER

The station is an investment, a part of your overall business folio. You may love the business of radio, but most of the time you love the business that radio generates for you. Your station(s) may be a part of a conglomerate of business endeavors, or it may be your whole involvement. In most cases you have someone else running the station for you and you communicate with the station through regular reporting channels (i.e., revenues, ratings, expenses, goals, planning, and the physical plant).

A STATION MANAGER

You are the mother hen for several very different departments (such as Programming, Sales News, Promotion, Bookkeeping, Engineering and General Office). Each has its own peculiar staffing needs. You may manage an AM/FM combo, in which case some of the departments are duplicated or combined. You are there to sit in judgement on appeals and proposals to approve budgets for all station-wide operational items. These may include billboards, announcers' salaries, a leaky roof, consulting fees, sales incentives. If you are a smart General Manager, you will have delegated much of this decision making process to your department heads, along with the authority to approve certain budget line items at their discretion. You have the station owner or corporate bosses over your head and you must answer to them on a regular basis, especially if there are variations between proposed and actual expenses and/or revenues. If you are not a good manager, you will want to eyeball every single item no matter how small and give hundreds of decisions weekly on each one of them. This is, of course, impossible... so you will most likely slight most important issues while wrestling with the insignificant ones. You will try to dress nicely and several times a year you will actually appear to some employees to be their best friend.

A PROGRAM DIRECTOR:

You've probably already been or still are on the air. You have combined the knowledge of on-the-air techniques with some degree of business and managerial sense. You sit in the middle. On the one side you protect and defend your Programming decisions while on the other side you must administer the decisions made by Management and Ownership to the air staff. You are an advocate for the air staff and go to bat for their needs. Each of them expresses to you their personal and professional needs and priorities. You, in turn, arrange their requests among the other priorities you have established as necessary for success. They don't always match. You have two goals:

- (A) To increase measured audience for the station and
- (B) To generate Sales opportunities through the Programming.

As an artist and executor of Programming ideas you strive for success at item "A". Realistically, no matter how good the station gets in the ratings, it has failed if item "B" is not achieved.

ON THE AIR TALENT:

This is it...show biz! You actually get paid for entertaining people. Built in to all the sparkle, you endure irate listeners, air-check review sessions, not nearly enough money to support the lifestyle of the public figure you are, :75 second one-minute spots, impertinent members of the office staff who can't understand why you get paid what you do... for what you do. You yearn for job security but deep down inside you know that this job is only a stopping off point in your career... up or down. You make ends meet with occasional "talent fees" and personal appearances. Your wife works as does your ex-wife. Your children are precocious and are repeatedly being asked if they are going to be on the radio someday, too. You are near the bottom of the power flow-chart within the station but you are highest in visibility and responsibility to the public. You sometimes have a problem with that. If you are a good radio personality, you not only execute the on-air techniques skillfully, but you understand something about your audience and place yourself among them frequently. You also understand something that has taken you a few years to learn...that success is often measured by what you give rather than by what you get.

The purpose of this book is to address all issues that concern the operation of a radio station. Radio: ...The Book is another weapon in your arsenal to defeat your competitors. Whether Owner, Manager, Air Talent, or Program Director, you are in varying degrees responsible for the success of the radio station. In the recent decade of over-researched music, over-asked listeners, boiler plate promotions, "safe" music, and card reader-10 in a row mentality, there needs to be some way to break the cycle.

Hit songs don't start out that way. They earn their chart position. OUTSTANDING contests evolve from GOOD contests which evolve from BAD ones. Before listener reaction can be measured, it has to be evoked. Rather than spend page after page telling you about the kind of radio that "tests well," I'd like to open a few doors to the kind of radio that is fun and that can be developed from original ideas.

If you accomplished nothing else by reading this book, use it as a springboard for a kind of thinking that frees you long enough from perpetuating mediocrity to try something on your own. I've tried to give some answers here to some typically asked questions. But I've also raised some new questions for you to ponder and solve. This book should be used as a fall-back point -- a thought starter -- a catalyst for activating new and original ideas.

Chapter 4: Radio As A Career

Radio is a career. To those who are sincerely dedicated to their work, it can become an exciting, challenging opportunity. But first, there must be commitment. It takes no less commitment to succeed at radio than it does to be a great dancer, actor, musician, artist, or in any other artistic profession. Over the past several decades, there have been countless individuals who've tried their hand at radio and failed. It's an attractive field. After all, it's clean, inside, no heavy lifting, fun, and provides some ego benefits. Too often persons have given-up on radio because they were unable to land a job that met their needs and standards.

BE FLEXIBLE

The truth is that radio requires the sort of devotion and determination which demand you go where the jobs are and accept the positions that are available, rather than wait for them to come to you. Too often, young radio-aspiring individuals get comfortable in their community, accept obligations, both financial and personal, and then depend heavily on their radio station position to maintain that status. When the radio job vanishes due to any one of a variety of reasons, so does the security. So solidly entrenched into the personal and financial commitments, it becomes impossible to relocate to another geographical area, i.e. a spouse has a career, the family bought a house, car, personal items. All of a sudden...trapped!

In 99% of the cases, a successful career in radio begins with an early determination to not obligate oneself too deeply; to remain flexible and open to change; to resist the temptation to get too comfortable in one spot; and foremost...to be absolutely driven by the desire to succeed in radio exclusively. This means that you will accept no substitutes and no other career opportunities can seriously be considered, no matter how lucrative or tempting. Getting into radio isn't quite like going into a monastery, but you kind of have to think that way going in. It may get more fun later when they let you ring the bells. I have frequently been reminded of the sad failure of some talented people to be successful radio people when I review a resume which looks like this:

Station A for a year,
then, a stint as an exterminator,

Station B for a year,
then on to working for a hardware store chain for
2 years,

Station C for six months,
then to school for a semester while working part time at

Station D followed by,
two more years selling office equipment
...all in the same state!

This person is NOT a dedicated radio broadcaster. A true radio junkie will always work. Only radio. Any station. Anywhere. Anytime. To be employed out of radio is death.

DROP-INS

The glut of occasional broadcasters or "drop-ins" (as I prefer to call them) helps to create a shortage of jobs for the real professional. They tie up available positions and deny them to someone who really cares. They ultimately find some way to lose the job themselves. They generally are malcontented in the first place and talk about "radio" as if its out to get them and there is some divine plan to exclude them from stardom and wealth. It's never their fault and rarely do they have any kind words about anything or anybody in the radio work environment.

CAREER PART-TIMERS

Not to be confused with the radio "drop-in" is another valuable type of radio broadcaster... the career part-timer, who makes no real effort to pursue a permanent, full-time, radio career. They often have other business interests which occupy their primary career goals. They are talented and are valuable to a station because they are available for vacations, fill-ins, weekends or whatever. They make terrific employees because they will not likely be leaving for a better radio job, nor will they seek advancement at their present station. This is the same kind of individual who participates in community theatre but would never seriously run off to New York to seek an acting career.

Many aspects of radio broadcasting can be taught, especially the technical aspect. Talent cannot be taught. It can only developed from what is naturally there. When viewing radio broadcasting from the outside, it appears that the buttons, knobs, meters, dials, tape machines, transmitters, etc. are incredibly complex and must be very difficult to learn. The talking part, actually saying things on the radio: Now, THAT looks so easy. The truth is, it's just the reverse. The basic radio operations equipment used by someone on the air can be learned in a few days (maybe hours, with little prior experience at all).

But the part about "TALKING"...now that becomes a lifetime quest for perfection. The great air talent, the guys making the big bucks in radio, aren't pulling down those six-figure salaries because they know how to change transmitter power or get the newsroom on the air.

RADIO SCHOOLS

Many proprietary radio schools claim they can teach becoming a radio broadcaster. They proclaim, "You'll be on the way to an exciting, challenging, career field". You've seen those ads on TV that make becoming a radio personality and getting a job in radio -- seem as likely as becoming a truck driver, dental assistant, home repair expert, or legal aide.

Talent and perseverance are the keys to success in radio, tempered with ingenuity and some good business sense. To seduce someone into broadcasting who is not equipped with these basics, is wrong and ultimately very disappointing to the radio school student. Very often, this sort of "school" preys upon the young and those who may be down on their luck. They sell them the dream of becoming a famous radio personality and persuade them to commit to thousands of dollars worth of borrowed money (often government subsidized loans), which the student is obliged to pay back after graduation. By the end of the course, you can be sure, The typical graduate is far from ready for any meaningful job in the industry. The last thing they need is another disappointment, but they're left with an unfulfilled dream of career success. Frankly, broadcasting doesn't need more people fighting for the few jobs, it needs less. To pretend that there is some school-prepared certification for "Announcer" or "News" jobs is simply false. Many career professionals resent the attitude that all it takes to become what they are is six weeks and a few thousand dollars tuition. Radio realistically resembles the old European guild apprentice way of doing things. One learns by following closely behind those who are already in the business. You learn by asking questions, hanging around stations, getting to know broadcasters personally and by listening to the radio, relentlessly...listening and listening and listening.

Even so, some hands-on experience with radio school facilities may help to familiarize a newcomer with the technical operation of a station. Often broadcast school teachers are area radio people with whom communication can be established. But classes, degrees or diplomas have never been required for radio success.

COLLEGE

As far as college itself is concerned, most schools now have a radio facility of some sort. It can be a good way to learn the basic technical skills, but it's not real radio. The real reason high school or college radio is not real radio is because there is *no money* at stake. No sales, no revenue vs. expense picture, salaries, promotional budget, or cash flow. At the entry level, there may be occasional opportunities for students in a regular college or high school curriculum to become an apprentice in a radio station. This is probably the best entry opportunity for a radio beginner since many apprentices go on to become part-time then occasionally full time employees, school obligations permitting. Beyond this, there are few chances for entering the industry and certainly even less for persons in their adult years looking for a career change approach to entry into the business. Remember the old adage "those who can...do, those who can't...teach"? Never more true than in radio.

Decidedly, the best overall broadcasters and the ones most flexible seem to be the ones who pursued a Liberal Arts curriculum. The truly talented people also know something substantial about a variety of subjects. After all, a radio personality is talking to listeners, not himself. The more he knows about the subjects of concern to his listeners, the more he can identify with them. Being locked in a tiny studio and knowing everything there is to know about radio does not make you interesting to someone on the outside. Knowing something about *their* way of life, politics, beliefs, values, tastes and corner of the world, does. One repetitive fact in studying debate is that you can always win if you know the opponents argument better than he does. A similar application of this rule works with winning listeners from competitors.

Chapter 5: The Resume

Once the decision has been made to go for a radio position or upgrade existing employment, it's time to get to the issue of the two basic elements in air talent hiring...the Aircheck and the Resume. Let's start with the resume.

I'm assuming that most readers of this publication are already in or near the radio business in one form or another. Therefore, here are some resume rules for persons already having some broadcasting or related experience. I'm still mystified by what to put on a resume for someone applying at the entry level because good radio people come from so many different backgrounds. However, it appears entry level positions are largely granted by the depth of the impression made at the personal interview. For the rest of us, here are a few basics that most Program Directors look for:

1. ONE PAGE

Keep it simple. A single page outlining the highlights of your career achievements and experience will suffice. Should more be needed later, then it can be requested. Resist temptation to go for the "shotgun effect," that is putting down everything you've ever done, hoping the Program Director will find something he/she likes. P.D.'s know that applicants have done additional things than what's on the resume and will ask if they want to know more.

2. KEEP IT CURRENT

Include a current address and phone number. If you move, print a new resume. Don't white out or mark through the old one.

3. NEATNESS COUNTS

Never handwritten. Only present a neat, professionally-typed page. Avoid erasures, uneven lines, extraneous marks or flaw on the page. Make sure you have correctly spelled the name of the person you're writing to and that you have his/her exact title.

4. ALTERNATE CONTACT

Work phone or second contact number. More than a few jobs have gone to other people because the employer could not contact an applicant. If you are seeking a new job and don't want your present employer to find out about it, the more reason to include secondary contact numbers. At least, have an answering machine to take calls.

5. GROUP SIMILAR ITEMS

Sort experience by type. Rather than a running chronology of everything you've done, separate them and list in groups. For example, most radio people have other interests and other employment associated with their primary radio jobs. This may include Theatre, commercials, public-speaking, or civic involvement.

6. AVOID NON-INDUSTRY REFERENCES

Eliminate non-radio positions unless they specifically relate to the business. Do include experience in TV, Theatre, Speech, Journalism, and Technical fields.

7. GUARANTEE DELIVERY

It might be expensive, but send resumes by certified, return receipt mail if you cannot deliver it in person. It is another small way to set yourself apart from the crowd. It also supplies you with documentation of job hunting should you need it for tax or unemployment insurance reasons. I recommend sending your material in a brightly-colored envelope, preferably red or yellow. While we're at it, take the time to FAX a very brief memo to alert the P.D. to expect your (RED or YELLOW) parcel.

8. NO FORM LETTER

Each resume should be accompanied by a personal cover-letter directed to the Program Director. Never a form letter or "Dear P.D." salutation. If you are applying to a station in another city just because of the stations reputation, make sure the personnel at the station hasn't changed. P.D.'s come and go too, you know. All it takes is a phone call to be certain.

9. FOLLOW UP

When you get the return receipt back in the mail, call the P.D. to confirm that he has actually gotten the material. You may also ask about the status of the hiring process and the likelihood of a personal interview when you call.

Chapter 6: The Air Check Tape

The aircheck represents the on-air experience and "sound". The resume synthesizes career achievements to writing. A demo tape is usually prepared in a recording studio and is produced especially for a specific job seeking purpose. Demo tapes are usually assembled when the job applicant is not actually working for a station or not in a desired format. Demo tapes are also produced to demonstrate alternative styles and presentations other than their current format will permit. An air-check tape is recorded directly off the air during an actual broadcast, then edited later or "skimmed" while recording to eliminate music, commercials, or non-essential elements. A good quality, short length cassette is still considered the standard for air check-demo tape applications. Here are a few things that most program directors will be listening to:

1. ALWAYS HAVE A CURRENT AIRCHECK

Should be less than a month old. Make keeping an up-to-date tape a regular discipline, just like saving money, tough to do but necessary. A current aircheck also reflects recent affairs and events with which the Program Director may be familiar. Hearing comments regarding a recent news item is clearly more timely than a line about the Super Bowl from 2 years ago.

2. AIRCHECK SHOULD BE A COMPOSITE

The best airchecks are composites of 3 or 4 shows, giving some indication of both consistency and variety. If you've been at the same station a while, just include several samples of work from that station. It's not necessary to go back 15 years and demonstrate every station where you ever worked.

3. DON'T OVER-EDIT

Don't over-edit the tape. A good P.D. knows editing when he hears it and will be suspicious of something a little too tight and slick. Edit for brevity or timing, not for covering mistakes.

4. 10 to 15 SECONDS OF EACH SONG

Include at least 10-15 seconds of each song on the tape. This lets the PD get a little better, more relaxed "feel" for the station where you were/are working. It also provides a natural break between talk segments. Try to include portions of the front and back of each song. Edit the middle of the music so you hear an identifiable beginning and the ending of the song. Include a variety of music types and tempos.

5. GET RID OF THE TAPE "WOW"

If the air-check was recorded on a skimmer (cassette player that turns on and off with the microphone), edit the "WOW" (where the tape machine started and stopped) out of the tape. It sounds better and may set the presentation apart from the others.

6. SHORT BREAKS FIRST

Put briefest breaks first. Always include the basics... call letters, time, temperature, weather conditions, slogans, dial position, etc. Slightly longer bits, full weather, promo liners, ad libs, should go in the middle, then finish with the longest bit, live spot, phone call, or prepared material.

7. IDEAL LENGTH 7--10 MINUTES

Ideal air-check length is 7-10 minutes. PD's say they can "hear it" in the first minute and, in fact, may only listen that long. You can tell really bad air talent right off the bat, and usually a pretty good talent will be equally obvious. First hearing of an air-check is only the beginning of the elimination process. Better to have 7-10 minutes of additional material available should you make the cut and get a second listen.

8. COMMERCIALS/PRODUCTION ON OTHER SIDE

Produced commercial spots and production/promotion work should go on a separate presentation on the backside of the air-check cassette, not sprinkled throughout the air shift presentation. Having your own commercials on your own show may be over-kill as well as ear-fatiguing. Production is production and an air shift is an air shift, each with individual qualities and qualifications.

Remember...Program Directors will listen to an air-check until:

- a. he hears something distasteful
- b. he hears something unprofessional or amateurish
- c. he hears too much repetition
- d. the technical quality is unlistenable
- e. he gets a good feel for your ability and will listen to more later
- f. the phone rings.

Make the air-check count. It's probably the most important single item in getting an on-the-air position. Use a new, quality cassette with a neatly typed label on both sides. Put a phone number on the cassette in case it gets separated from the resume. Include the total running time of each side of the cassette so the P.D. knows how much time to budget to hear the whole effort (another good reason to make it short). No hand-written labels, either.

Keep up with the industry, it's show-biz - DRESS THE PART!

Air talent for Personality stations can take two forms.

1. Members of the air staff have permission (and ability) to express themselves on the air, to create an on-air persona, character, or personable quality, they will be in the foreground of the on-air presentation, publicized, and promoted.
2. The entire station itself has a collective personality and each member of the air staff contributes a discipline and consistent image to support that personality.

In a non-personality station. The air staff serve mostly as hosts, producers, or announcers, mostly chosen for vocal skill and efficiency. Other elements of the programming are considered more important with the air staff playing a more background role.

At personality stations, or perhaps being only one of a few personalities on an other wise non-personality station, visibility is a key element in success. Personal appearances and market identity are extremely important for creating a station image and Sales Department opportunities. That "personality" has a worth and may be sold to benefit station revenue.

When seeking work at a personality station, know the image of the station. Take some time to learn how the station is projected into the community and what the overall character of the station is according to its listeners to according to its own promotional thrust. Public appearances. Be ready to encounter a reasonably aggressive company attitude.

A professional photo is an asset to being considered for many radio jobs. The traditional 8x10 glossy still has quite a bit of clout when it comes to hiring. If you have a professional quality video presentation, use it as well. With so many potential applicants, the job of personality hiring has more characteristics of theatrical casting, looking the part, getting the role. Radio has gone visual. Consider the prospects of being on the station's TV spots, billboards, newspaper ads as well as countless personal appearances at promotional and civic events. Using personal appearance qualities as job qualifications for air talent is legal and should be considered when entering the business and moving up the career ladder.

The days where radio qualifications rest entirely on one's vocal skills are gone. Other aspects of getting the role may include athletic ability, special skills, musical talents, and whatever criteria may result in the station getting the most "personality" from the person.

Chapter 7: Getting Into A Job -- Negotiating

At some point, Air Talent/Program Director/Job seeker is actually considered for a job. There is enough mutual interest to warrant further conversation or a personal meeting. As in any negotiations, both sides must win (or think they have won) for a successful agreement to be reached. In heading for the bargaining table at a radio station, consider this:

1. NON-PERSONALITY STATIONS

"Non-personality" stations have the least flexibility in salary negotiating. They are looking mostly for a compatible "sound" for their music presentation. They often have a wide variety of applicants since there are more people in radio with good voices than there are with great personalities. These also are the stations most likely to be/become automated, requiring an even smaller total staff requirement if not altogether out-sourced.

2. PERSONALITY STATIONS

"Personality" stations will often take the longest to select a new staff member. Chances are, the decision will be made by more than just the P.D. alone, often the G.M. must give approval since Sales are directly affected by a new personality. Be patient during the process. It's alright to ascertain status reports of the talent search, but don't be a pest and offer ultimatums and deadlines.

3. PERSONAL INTERVIEW

A personal interview is a MUST for any radio job. Professionals do not hire/are not hired sight-unseen based upon a tape and resume. At some point, during every radio station job seeking exercise, prepare for and encourage a personal interview. The earlier in the process you can have any personal contact, the better. You'll be a real person in their memory rather than just another tape or resume.

4. VERSATILITY VS. SPECIALIZATION

Versatility is important in smaller markets where you may be called upon to do a variety of functions. Specialization is more sought after in larger markets when you simply have to be terrific at what they hire you for.

5. KNOW THE DIFFERENCE

There are BIG STATIONS in small markets and there are small stations in BIG MARKETS, know the difference. Learn where the station you apply to stands in its market.

Here are the best ways to learn the market before going for an interview:

1. **Check any ratings reports** or ARB information about the number of stations in the market and the competitive status of the station you're talking with.
2. **Subscribe** to (or phone order) the SUNDAY paper from the market for a few weeks before you go there to talk). Pay close attention to:
 - a. housing (availability and cost)
 - b. salaries of comparable other professions listed in your local paper (for example, how much does a teacher, nurse, tradesman or clerical worker make where you are compared to where the job is?)
 - c. advertisements for food, clothing, retail items
 - d. arts, sports, events, names in the news
3. **Call the union local.** If the station is an AFTRA (American Federation of Television and Radio Artists) station, call the local office and get the contract scale minimums for the station (or other stations in the market). Nothing deflates a job negotiation faster than for you to ask for less than they HAVE to pay you.
4. **Call the Chamber of Commerce,** request information from them as if you are a prospective new resident (which you might soon actually be).
5. **Go to the city,** personally, for a sneak preview of the community and the station. Do a little personal research and ask people you meet about the station.

Because of the commercial interaction a radio station has with other businesses, there might be some job benefits available for the negotiating table not generally available to other businesses. As a consumer, make a list of the top ten expenses and/or needs you anticipate must be met by your employment. Obviously, all of them can be acquired with money, but money is only the go-between. Then, check the list to see if there might not be something the station may be in a position to acquire directly for you via trade or barter in exchange for reduced salary demands.

Here is a list of "things" (necessities and luxuries) various radio personalities have used in job negotiating and how they can be acquired:

1. **Money** (Always on the top of the list). Include the following:
 - a. Salary
 - b. An advance on Salary to get started
 - c. A company loan (to be repaid)
 - d. Co-signature on an institutional loan
 - e. Escalating salary (built in raises)
 - f. Company stock certificates
 - g. Profit sharing

2. **Vacation time**

Agree on vacation time before you sign up. Don't be caught in the "company vacation policy" trap. Any employment agreement supersedes company policy. Rather than express vacation time in weeks, suggest in number of days, which could be used for long weekends, or full weeks. Agree to "non-ratings" dates in exchange for length of time. Attend conventions on behalf of the station or company, then take a few extra days of your own.

3. **Relocation (moving) expenses**
 - a. Complete packing and moving
 - b. Truck or Trailer rental
 - c. An allowance for you to do what you want
 - d. Lodging until settled
 - e. Apartment/House hunting expense or service
 - f. Air fare to former city to take care of loose-ends a few months following relocation

4. **Length of Work Week or length of Air Shift**

They want 7 days, you want 5; they want 6 hours on the air, you want 3. Use in combination with each other for a realistic schedule, include "Off air" duties, too.

5. **Automobile**

Station leases or buys vehicle outright in exchange for commercial schedule for dealer, assign value to this item by which salary may be adjusted.

6. **Automobile expenses**

Gas, Oil, and Repairs usually easy to trade

7. **Rent**
Apartment complexes and real estate agencies need advertising too, work a deal on a vacant unit or reduced rate.
8. **Travel Expenses**
Travel agencies love to promote, accept partial payment in airline/hotel benefits
9. **Home furnishings**
Furniture and Department stores, decorator shops all do dollar for dollar trade
10. **Home and Lawn care**
Sometimes seasonal, but everything from gardeners to housekeepers need to advertise
11. **Appliances**
Home appliances and electronic appliances (new AND used)
12. **Personal Grooming-Health Clubs**
Love personal endorsements from radio announcers
13. **Medical/Dental (not insurance, the real thing)**
Now it's legal for Medical Doctors, Dentists, and Chiropractors to advertise, get a dollar amount of services at your disposal. (I don't know why more stations don't provide basic dental maintenance to air staff by tradé with a dental office. It's cheaper than paying for the same coverage by insurance.)
14. **Construction**
You may need to purchase the supplies or materials, but small contractors and home improvement folks rarely have the money to advertise, but are often willing to work in exchange for advertising or exposure.
15. **Transportation and/or parking**
In bigger cities, commuter rail tickets and parking lot fees are reasonable requests. Even a bicycle or motorbike may be practical.
16. **Child care/Day care, private schools**
ANY business needs advertising or endorsements. Even if they don't currently advertise or have any experience, offer to assist them in developing an ad campaign if it means gaining their service for your use.

17. Restaurants

One of the all-time basic perks. Station must already have a restaurant trade somewhere or it's not a real radio station. Get in on it.

18. Clothing

Basic clothing from stores can be traded in smaller amounts, especially with some cash purchases. More stylish stores may like a personal endorsement from a radio personality who frequently attends public events (MC jobs, TV appearances, Talks).

19. Cable

You can't talk on the air about what you've watched on cable if you don't have cable.

20. Schooling

Get the wife and kids jobs as welders, secretaries, hair stylists, computer operators, air conditioning specialists, or a myriad other certified professions. If you've seen them advertise ANYWHERE, they'll trade for enrollment. Some privately owned colleges may accept advertising in exchange for tuition for credit courses.

21. Anything else

Don't be afraid. List your needs, examine them as likely targets for a job perk.

Helpful hint: If you are negotiating with the General Manager, his time is valuable and so is that of his Sales Department. Don't give them a shopping list of little, insignificant items. The station makes no money on trade and salesmen make no commission. Set your priority items and those items that, if provided to you, can save the station some money and give you what you want. If you know the market, you might do a little homework and speak with some potential advertisers about their receptiveness to trade for services you want.

Unless you are financially secure already, don't accept things you really don't need in lieu of salary. It might be nice to have a new room de-humidifier or a canoe with trailer, but it doesn't pay the rent or meet the other day-to-day needs. Most often, it's the humble things that management is more willing to help with, rather than the ego-boosting luxuries. I'd take a couple of cases of toilet paper or canned soup over a pasta maker any day.

Although ratings incentives are often an important part of a PD or Air Personality contract, they shouldn't be used in lieu of salary necessary to exist day-to-day. There are too many variable factors that come into play in ratings, most of which have nothing to do with you. Ratings incentives should be thought of as a "Bonus" or icing on the cake, over and above the employment agreement. When using ratings incentives, be very specific, including:

The **exact dayparts** and days of the week (M-F, M-Sun, etc.)

If PD, then overall station progress,

If Talent, then shift improvement

If PD and Talent, set up separate goals

The **timetable** (Spring ARB vs. Fall ARB,

Winter 1995 vs. Winter 1996, etc.)

What **numbers**?

Shares, Cume, Quarter Hours, TSL

How is **payment** to be determined?

Percent increase? Tenth share point increase?

Market rank?

Here's a new twist. If Station Manager's position is, "ratings don't necessarily (or immediately) mean increased revenue...", then ask for an incentive plan based upon an override of Sales or percent of gross revenue for a given period. PD's can also suggest a "commission" on new business (1% or 2%) on top of the Salesperson's commission for each contract written during the period following a ratings result.

In job negotiations, do your homework first. Know going in what you need to accept the job. Don't accept a low salary, then try to scale down your life. Be realistic or you'll be unhappy. You'll also be on the Manager's doorstep asking for more money in a few months, which will not help you win any popularity contests. Before negotiating for a radio job, know as much as you can about the market (especially if you are from out of town). Demonstrate flexibility and an interest in adapting. Make your personal appearance and body-language say positive things about you. Radio personalities make lots of personal appearances as well as perform radio shows. You'll be judged on how you will represent the station in public as much as how you sound on the air. Think of radio hiring more like "casting" and less like "nice-voice, runs a tight board".

Chapter 8: Getting Out of a Job -- Negotiating

Getting out of a job is sometimes as difficult as getting into one. As a rule, some mention of "departure" should be included in any letter of agreement between a PD (or Air Talent) and Management. As sensitive as this issue is, the clearer it can be spelled out, the easier it is for both sides, professionally and emotionally upon termination. Voluntary departure usually means the PD/Air Talent is going on to greener pastures. Management should be sensitive to the necessity for career advancement, and PD/Talent should not leave without ample notice and a willingness to complete immediate tasks and remain available (at least by phone) for providing information and suggestions for his replacement.

It is normal that certain "perks" included in an employment contract are surrendered if the employee leaves within the first year, including repayment of any advances or company loans. If fired for "cause", per company policy, there's little recourse if the company has evidence of any alleged impropriety. Firing "for cause" should usually be explained to the employee first and he/she given the opportunity to resign, if he agrees with the company position. In all states, companies must prove "cause" if terminating an employee, so it is rarely used except in cases where there is little doubt.

Regrettably, "philosophical or artistic differences" are legitimate reasons for termination in this peculiar industry. Ratings performance and "poor execution of company directed policies" run a close second. Most radio separations should best be mutually settled. Given the fact that the employee would rather stay, little will make him/her happy other than having management re-think their temporary insanity. Short of that, have a reasonable talk with the station manager and come to some agreement of severance salary, terms, vacation pay due, and a mutually agreed "public" statement explaining the departure. If termination is involuntary, be sure the management provides something in writing to that effect, regardless of what the "public" statement may be. Don't jeopardize the rights to collect unemployment by the inference that you quit voluntarily.

If there is an employment contract with separation terms, they might include:

1. **Full Payment** to the end of the contract
2. **Payment of 50%** of the contract balance due (this is a suggested compromise that usually is acceptable)
3. **90-60-30 Days notice** or pay in lieu of notice
4. **Anything less than 30 days pay** is unreasonable. One or two weeks pay and "out the door" is unprofessional and insensitive.

Get it in writing. Have a third party look over the items and act as a sounding board for any questions. If you use an attorney, watch out!!! Unless the attorney specializes in broadcast or entertainment law, they'll suggest all sorts of ways to make everything so legal it can threaten a potentially good working relationship. A simple letter of agreement will suffice, signed by both parties. After all, you're both hoping that the agreement sets down what will happen when the station is a WINNER, so it should emphasize the positive elements of employment. Be realistic and be specific.

Sometimes, however, it just happens. You get fired. What are the most important things you should do before during and after the blessed event?

1. Most firings are not unexpected. Watch for clues from co-workers, changes in management attitude, market rumors, or just that pit of your stomach hunch.
2. Therefore, resumes, air-checks, and references should not be done in a last minute panic.
3. Get a clear understanding about why you are fired and what future status you have with the company like access to production studios, copiers, or jobs available within the company?
4. Get any severance offers (vacation, insurance, etc.) in writing.
5. When we get fired we feel a loss of self-respect, so go out for dinner or take an overnight trip. A pleasant or rewarding event helps restore self-worth and lets our mind clear.
6. Note the firing with a few words about how it felt.
7. Develop perspective about it, including the company's possible point of view.

8. Go to co-workers, shake hands and wish them well.
9. Don't whine. Show some class, they'll remember it.
10. Register for unemployment (state unemployment offices don't have a clue about radio,) even though you must endure the forms and procedures to get benefits.
11. Contact close friends in radio and explain your status and availability.
12. Bank Card companies offer a version of unemployment insurance covering monthly payments of your credit account if you lose your job. Their policy kicks in when you get the official word from the state unemployment office that you've been approved for benefits. Call each of your credit card companies and ask if they offer such a feature. Sign up today to remove a potential heavy financial burden as well as protect your credit status.

Chapter 9: Market and Music Research

In this section, we will be looking at the role that market research plays in the mission and the operation of a radio station. The smart programmer needs every bit of information he can lay his hands on to assemble a winning combination. I have no fundamental problem with any sort of research to develop a plan. I do disagree with many aspects of modern radio research companies. It's not their fault. They really do gather, collate and distribute information for use by radio stations. My greatest disagreements lie in:

1. What to research
2. How to go about it
3. What role does research play in decision making
4. What other interests does the research company have
5. What other resources does the station have

Who even needs market research. The use of outside market research firms is almost universal today. These firms are expert marketers who employ persuasive speakers, show compelling data, and can provide reams of documentation to support or deny. Research is BIG business with established companies gaining in sophistication and expertise with newer companies springing up every day to fill in the cracks. I have had the pleasure of working with several major research organizations on a variety of radio station projects and am impressed by the degree of detail achieved by modern radio research. Being a realist, I also know that research is here to stay. However, we in America fear the danger of a one-party system. Therefore, the prudent manager avoids relying too heavily on any one source of information. Professional market research is a useful management tool, but its value can easily be over-estimated. I advocate the use of alternative market information, effective use of staff talents, and raw creativity. I am not anti research, but in the interests of presenting another side of the question, I'll advocate for alternatives.

After all, it's my book.

Without negatively prejudicing the case for professional market research, let me point out that in 10 of the top 50 markets I've examined in preparation for writing this chapter, there are an average of 25 stations per market. Thirty percent of those stations were involved with or had recently undertaken a research project of some sort. As a rule the stations on the bottom stayed there, the stations on the top stayed there, and the challengers either won or lost a few points, occasionally. Pitting two top stations against each other (signal, funding, talent, and all else being equal) with both doing major research projects...one will win the other will lose. But how can this be? Maybe we need to look deeper into the research process and how is applied to each case. One thing to remember however...

**There are just as many losers who used research as there are winners.
Market research is no guarantee of victory.**

Most music research is based upon the premise that if people tell you their preference and you give it to them, you'll win. That's research in a nutshell. Supply and demand.

The problem with this is that people can only tell you what they are familiar with or about items that you have just exposed them to. For instance, when a new song comes out and you play a segment of that new song down a telephone line for somebody to hear they only hear a very small portion of that song, they don't hear the whole thing, they don't have a chance to really get familiar with it or know much about the artist or in the case of most music it just takes time for all songs to be accepted. Even the biggest all time hits got their reputation from gradually becoming familiar and preferred by listeners. Much of a song's popularity also depends on the other music against which it was in competition for listener attention during its initial exposure. Mediocre songs sound pretty good next to terrible songs, but in a really good musical era, there may be a glut of excellent material.

Keep in mind that most songs from, say, 30 years ago were played back to back with other songs of the same era. They are not competing with music 10-20 years newer or older as in many of today's formats. It took time for a single music selection to work its way up the charts (and back down). This gave every song several months of public exposure through continual, but not constant, air-play. Some were on the national charts for almost a year. There were no television videos and music fan magazines were few and only published every week or month. Even most radio stations didn't program music all the time. Music shows were interspersed with dramatic or comedy series and news.

READ THIS!

Today's material has a shelf-life of a few weeks of maximum exposure. Then, once it hits the top of the charts, it vanishes. I feel the minimal time exposure for today's material will create an entire era of music with so little popular familiarity that there will be virtually no market for it in future years. Contrast them with today's oldies: These songs are still popular because they became familiar to the listener over a longer period of time. With few exceptions, this simply will not be so for contemporary songs in today's popular formats.

Another problem with "testing" music that has been around for 20-30 years is that listener's opinion of the music has already been set from the time the songs were first exposed. The memories evoked by the song are usually more significant than the music itself. Because memories are so subjective to the listener, a particular selection will be favored by different people for different reasons. Comparing them to one another on overall popularity is comparing apples with bananas.

NOW, READ IT AGAIN!

The #1 song on a popularity list of tested songs may be more familiar overall than the #30 song on the same list, but #30 may be a better song for evoking memories and may be generally more durable within a format. Music research in these cases actually measures something that has already been done to the listener at some time in their music-listening history. Music tests of older selections do not predict audience reaction. They only measure the recognition level a song achieved within a target audience. A station may have played a significant role in exposing music to its audience in the first place. How that music is ultimately remembered is up to each individual listener. The audience may like or dislike the song, but both feelings are fixed by history and you cannot change that. We cannot forget the notion that of all the songs a person has ever heard, they will select only a few as their favorites. Some songs just may not "test well" when played alone, but are perfectly acceptable in the company of other songs where they fit as part of the overall mix.

Music research is always based in the present. It asks, "How do you like these songs today?" This attitude presupposes that present opinions are the road maps to the future. I suspect this is not the case. Again, the subjectivity of music preference allows for songs to have established meanings to the listener. How they like a song now has no effect on the original memory of the song, which may never be changed.

Never forget: Of older songs, the time, charm, and impact of music has already occurred. Songs strike familiar chords in different people for different reasons.

For example, at Golden Oldies formatted stations, the appeal is to persons who attended High School in the 1950's and 1960's. That type of music had a sound and a feel that is not only musical, but it paints a picture in the listener's mind of the times they lived in and enjoyed (or not) when the songs were new and enjoyed maximum public exposure on radio and jukeboxes.

All the songs simultaneously popular (not just the top 20) from the year helped create the mood and ambiance that created the overall image of the era. To only select the so-called "top" songs from a year or era, denies the listener the remaining music necessary to complete the picture. Comparing the musical portrait being painted by a radio station to an oil painting by an artist, the researchers will ask the audience what are their favorite colors, then paint a picture with only those colors. Whereas, in reality and in creating the more lasting image, a true artist without benefit of research, will create a picture using all the colors as well as subtle shades for an overall impression. Therefore to restrict a playlist to strictly numerical favorites fails to give the total complexion of the music/era you are programming and will ultimately be deemed incomplete by target listeners. It denies them the total atmosphere needed to relive the era and times you are trying to favorably evoke.

In the case of even older music, M.O.R. Adult Standards, Country or Top 40 Oldies, there are literally thousands and thousands of songs. From a merely physical point of view, it's impossible to store, much less play, every song. Now, with the creation of Compact Discs, DAT, CD-ROM and other audio storage technologies, it is possible to devise a system which includes an incredible number of songs necessary to create the total atmosphere of the era. Here again, the problem with music research is its insistence upon taking the same tried and true several hundred songs that were the top "chart" songs at the exclusion of the other material necessary to complete the format. Obviously, there's more than one way to perform a hit, familiar song. Music researchers routinely deny this.

Hundreds of the most hummable, singable, memorable musical selections of all time have NO original hit version.

Here's a list of familiar songs from an Adult Standards playlist. Chances are you can hum the melody to many of them. Can you recall who had a "hit" with each?

What Now My Love...Heart and Soul...Dancing in the Dark...
Love is a Many Splendored Thing...Where or When...Smile...
My Favorite Things...When My Sugar Walks Down the Street...
It had to be You...Anything Goes...On a Clear Day...
Somewhere...Time after Time...Just one of Those Things...
Put on a Happy Face...That Old Black Magic...Summertime...
The Second Time Around...Tenderly...Lullabye of Broadway...
Embraceable You...Deep Purple...My Funny Valentine...

The fact is, you can "hear" in your imagination several different singers doing their own version of each song. Look at the list again and:

"Hear" Frank Sinatra sing any of them,
then

"Hear" Peggy Lee or Robert Goulet or Ella Fitzgerald,
then

"Hear" any of your personal, favorite artists, even Michael Jackson, Elvis, or
Madonna, Elton John.

Simple facts of music versatility and variety are almost always discounted by music researchers, who usually pick one version and rank it numerically. It then becomes the total representation of that song in their format.

These songs were recorded by many different artists for many different reasons. Record buyers in the 1940's, 1950's and early 1960's bought records, not just because they liked the songs, but because they were fans of the artists. A record buyer would go out and purchase a Frank Sinatra, Johnny Mathis, Peggy Lee, Ray Conniff, or Vic Damone album because they wanted to hear that artist's version of a popular song. Even in the days of the Big Bands, each band would feature, as part of their show, songs made popular by other bands. This gives strong evidence that there has always been a significant pool of listeners with a high preference for artists who perform a variety of songs, not only the exclusive handful of selections that became "chart" hit records. Regrettably, research seldom takes this into account.

To further illustrate the timeliness of this philosophy, there is a current phenomenon which mirrors the earlier practice of recording alternative versions of established, familiar songs by today's artists. Today's Modern Country and Lite/Soft Adult Contemporary are including re-recordings of older songs by newer artists. Following the "only-play-the-original-hits" theory, there would be no market for this product. This is clearly not the case.

There has always been a love affair between the Radio and Record industries. Clearly, both industries are immeasurably intertwined and interdependent. Radio listeners -- regular, ordinary, everyday people who use radio for basic information and entertainment -- are not aware of the Radio "industry" or the Record "industry" with any clear understanding. They are only aware of a little electronic box that delivers talk and music in a variety of formats. Their knowledge of the "industries" that are behind those songs and radio stations begins and ends at the radio on/off switch. Rather than cram industry jargon down the layperson's throat, what we really need to do is entertain them. They like songs they may hear in a night club, on TV, in an elevator, in a movie or play or hummed by a co-worker or wherever they may be exposed to music. To use only the record industry version of "hits" means to miss an enormous body of available music. Not all hit songs became hit records.

Many diverse elements go into making a song a hit record.

A song may become a hit due to:

1. the immediate popularity of the artist
2. the money behind the record
3. the promotional thrust of the record company
4. a movie or TV show
5. timeliness or lyric content
6. trendiness or popularity of a type of music

Because there are so many ways for a song to become a hit, it does not necessarily follow that the material is superior. It may be a great record...but not a great song. Even today's Grammy Awards include a "Song of the Year" as well as "Record of the Year," acknowledging a difference. The love affair between the radio and record industries has made music researchers believe that the only music they ever need to research are the hits.

Radio stations that seek to create an atmosphere of familiarity and companionship with audiences are handicapped by research which spew out the same identical list of "safe" records that "test well" in market after market, city after city, station after station, year after year. Yet there are station owners eager to throw their money away on "testing" this music. My concern is that music research, as executed by many contemporary research organizations, often obstructs the creativity of talented programmers by limiting the music available to complete the format.

Music testing is an expensive item. Owners and Managers, who want to use what they've bought, mandate the use of the researched music within the format. The results of a music research project often override the preferences of a good PD. Ideally, music research should be used to supplement an existing format concept, while the selection of all other music should be left to the Program Director.

The great, classic songs of all time do not need to be researched. They have already been researched in that they have been recorded, sung and sold for 20, 30, 40, or 50 years. They sell sheet music, records, and tapes from catalogs long after their original popularity is over. Why re-invent the wheel? What is the purpose of taking these same songs we can all sing or hum along with and subject them to auditorium or phone "hook" testing? It is a wasteful and useless expense that ties up manpower and revenue. The hits are the hits. The more you play them, the closer you get to duplicating the atmosphere of familiarity listeners need in order to identify with the station. Therefore, Programmers should use extreme caution in researching material that already has a proven track record with the public. Moreover, they should not determine arbitrarily to restrict the music that is played on the air because of research results. Don't assume that the material you DID research has a higher priority than which you DID NOT.

Research can only give you results for material you decide to test.

Since it is too big (or too costly) a job for most stations to test every song, only rarely can accurate results be achieved which fairly and reasonably serve a wide-list, variety, older demographic station. With contemporary stations, the hype, the drive and the promotion behind getting songs on the air is a far more fluid and ongoing process.

Programming contemporary music becomes a daily, or at least weekly, chore which demands the concerted efforts of record promotion people and either Music Directors or Program Directors, with an eye toward song and artist reaction in the marketplace. I'm not really sure there is an answer for exactly how to select new music for a contemporary station. The whole matter is directly related to the accuracy of the combined talents and perceptions of the persons charged with the responsibility.

It's odd and contradictory that when music is "new" the experience and expertise of the Music Director is relied upon heavily. Yet when a song has already had its run and earned its merit, then it can only be played when the research reports allow it. Very often, selecting new music is not so much a question of what to play as it is in what rotation to play it, or at what power level. Since most contemporary stations do ongoing music research (at least some form of audience call-out qualifies), the rotation and frequency of a particular song can change daily or weekly. This requires maximum flexibility in station formatics in order to accept the updated music selections and yet remain consistent in its overall sound.

In considering a music research project and, addressing the question "What to Research?" Generally, here's a rule of thumb:

The older the demographic you go after in targeting the radio station, the less likely it becomes that you will need massive music research.

Chapter 10: How to Use Research

Modern radio research can take a variety of different approaches in gathering its data. For the sake of simplicity, let's talk about a hypothetical radio station that is :

1. trying to locate a format in its marketplace
2. trying to secure itself musically in the minds of listeners
3. trying to secure itself through non-musical elements (sports, news, traffic, weather, personalities, etc.)

The primary concern, once the decision has been made that the situation demands the input of some sort of research, is how to go about getting the information required and from whom you will get it.

Will you ask existing listeners about their preferences and perceptions of the station?

or...

Will you ask the general public about the stations overall impression in the community, even among non-listeners?

or...

Will you ask the public about overall listening preferences and tastes with the goal of determining a programming void in the market and how the station may fill it?

In any case, you will discover some revealing information about the station. The basic caution in asking "How to do It," is raised by what radio is all about in the first place. Radio is a very intimate and private medium. Because of that, attempts to "test" radio or to ask for responses about radio's impact from listeners in a blatant and less than intimate manner can often defeat the confidential attitude listeners hold about their relationship with their favorite radio station. In betraying this confidence, one is likely to get misleading results from audience research.

Let's suppose we are going to ask a listener about the radio station. Let's also suppose that this person listens to radio in:

1. the comfort of their own home (maybe the bedroom, the kitchen, the garage, or even the bathroom)
2. their car (in traffic, on a long drive, shopping, conducting business)
3. their place of work (keep one company, set a mood, entertain)

Remember, this listener has selected a particular radio station for whatever reasons, whether for music, information, or personalities, in order to be a part of one or more of these private environments. Is it fair, then, or completely representative to ask this same listener to sit in a round-table focus group with 10-15 other people, or auditorium with 50-100 other people, or on a telephone with an interviewer and make judgements, statements and comments about things regarding the radio station that are very intimate and private?

The telephone itself is a very impersonal medium of communication, so telephone interviewing can be distressing to some people. Even though they do have the benefit of a certain degree of anonymity while on the phone and can avoid physical confrontation, it is not uncommon for the person interviewed to be hesitant and guarded about the information being solicited from them.

Radio listening covers every possible age group from pre-teens to death's door. Clearly, each type of person on this age scale will respond to different types of inquiries in a manner that is comfortable to them. Currently, no type of radio research attempts to approximate the listening environment while soliciting listener response.

For example: In the case of younger listeners, peer pressure is a primary life influence. It is demonstrated in their clothing, their social life, their attitudes, their values and their self expression. Why then would it not be wise for a station that wants to research this segment of the audience to conduct the research in peer settings and situations? To use a school classroom rather than an auditorium? Or a pizzeria rather than a conference room?

Put the listener in a research environment that replicates the listening environment. If other people must be present, let them be peer-group members. Keep in mind that "same demographic" does not always mean "peer group". It may be necessary to sub-classify the groups down to the clubs or cliques with whom they frequently socialize.

All age groups comprise parochial sub-groups. These distinctions more clearly define the group members than common chronological age. Research information from these groups can provide a more accurate collective as well as individual opinion. Not to consider these divisions when soliciting research information removes a basic deciding element in determining their radio-listening habits.

As listeners mature and radio station demographics get older, research personnel should be asking themselves, "What is the environment in which these people are comfortable listening to and appreciating radio programming?" I suggest that the one-on-one personal interview might be the best interview technique with mature adult audiences. Our experience clearly indicates that information useful in the programming of the station's music can be gotten by individual, more personal interviews conducted informally at station events, promotions, or even when a listener stops by at the station (perhaps to pick up a contest prize or for some other business). This research technique can be extended to formalize some questions for listeners who call the station for comments, requests and general information.

The best research companies are the ones who provide a sliding scale of types of research techniques that can be applied to the rainbow of listener types and tastes and ages rather than the type of research company that is trying to sell the latest fad or buzzword in research technique. Remember also, if you are looking for honest, fair information, especially about existing programming, the best environment is one that is as compatible as possible with the listeners everyday listening environment.

In the case of a radio station looking to fill a void in a marketplace, again I feel that this area does not lend itself to research as much as might be originally imagined. It really does not take a radio wizard to take a look at a market of 15-25 radio stations to see where the format opportunities are.

Sometimes, there IS a case for using common sense.

Population and census information is available from ratings services, Chambers of Commerce, public and college libraries, and on-line computer services. An idea of the demographic spread in a market should be overlaid on the actual ratings of the stations already doing business in the market. This will give a good idea of what population cells are/are not being served by existing stations. This can be done simply by formulating a chart of demographics and listing each station that appeals to those demographics. A sample chart and more information regarding "Formats" is in another chapter by that name.

Too much attention has been paid in the last 10-15 years to the so-called "HOT" demographics. These are young, attractive professionals with readily disposable income who are upwardly mobile. Usually they are grouped between ages 18-34 or 25-54. It should be understood that this audience is fickle and can be swayed by marketing. They're seldom "brand loyal" and will try new products when influenced by advertising.

As listeners mature, hot demographics of the past become more settled, consistent and established demographic groups of the present. Their incomes have levelled. They have become more brand loyal through a decade or more of trial and error. They are more concerned with home and family than with impulse-buying that peer pressure induces. They have saved money and invested it. For the most part, they have dug-in for their life careers.

Recently, there has been growth in the number of stations that appealing to mature adults, especially 35-64. An even more dynamic demographic is 35+ or 45+. By raising the ceiling on the demographic with no maximum age, the demographic allows for service to viable consumer/listeners regardless of the age. This trend toward serving older demographics will become even more critical as the median age of the country as a whole gets older. This former "no man's land" of senior demos will command greater attention in the future. More competitive marketing and creative programming strategies will need to be developed to garner their attention and include them in radio's contemporary marketplace.

If any merchant in any city in America had 10,000 people show up at his store at one time, he could not handle the business, much less care about how old they are. As little as 3 or 4 percent of any major city's population could represent a number of listeners that large and create this sort of reaction if they could be motivated.

For a radio station to be effective, it does not have to offer something for everyone...but it has to be something "special" for a particular segment of the audience.

A station that's effective can motivate and mobilize the audience to patronize businesses, to show up at station events and respond to promotions. Essentially, the station must make its audience visible in their support of station activities, commercial or otherwise.

A few professional broadcasters with a broad range of experience and expertise can most often perceive almost immediately where market voids exist. And often they must swallow hard and super serve the target audience, even though personally, they may not like the selected format. If you own the station and have the luxury of turning it into a private jukebox, then go ahead. Otherwise, you're in business for profit. Too frequently Station Managers, Program Directors, and even Sales Managers create a station after their own taste and in their own image only to fail because **they** failed to serve the market segment.

Radio is a business. Businesses survive through their customers. Any influences that change the direction or the focus of the stations business opportunities are disruptive to the station itself and will contribute to its lack of success and ultimate downfall.

WHAT ROLE SHOULD RESEARCH PLAY?

Too often research plays 100% of the role in decision making. This is unfortunate. It creates an environment wherein the research organization can take improper advantage of a broadcaster. Radio station owners, especially new owners with large loan payments to make, spend a lot of time looking over their shoulders to see where the next expense might be hiding. They always keep an eye on the station's financial bottom line...sometimes to the degree that the creative process itself is crippled. It is for these people and their financial backers (often from outside the broadcasting industry) that requirements for excessive documentation seems to hand purpose.

More time, money and energy is spent trying to justify an expense than the expense itself. This is the corporate version of C.Y.A. (cover your ass, you'll be hearing it a lot!). A situation comes to exist where decisions cannot be made based upon any type of artistic or creative judgements simply because they do not have the support of any data or documentation to show that they are viable. Enter the research team...

Now, here is an organization, already in place, highly promoted and advertised, who can sample hundreds if not thousands of persons in the community.

They can:

collate...

cross-reference...

classify...

identify...

and otherwise document...

or establish(!)

...the sought after opinion or proposed station decisions.

They can present:

volumes of printed data...

narratives...

charts...

graphs...

and buzzwords...

... on a variety of subjects.

Armed with this information (or data), the decision-making process becomes easier to sell to the station stockholders, directors, or owners. This might be referred to as research for its own sake. The "spirit" of researching audience information should be to come up with a viable business plan. This "spirit" is often pushed aside or made secondary.

Many of today's radio stations are supported by money from investors who are not broadcasters. Also, a few years ago, in different economic times, radio stations fared better than they might be today. Therefore, there have been some astonishing losses in the value of radio stations. In being accountable to the investors, all decisions are supported by volumes of research. The precious limited financial resources are spent more to justify than to entertain. Therefore, much of the immediacy and responsiveness of radio has been removed by oppressive financial concerns with research companies being the primary benefactors.

Chapter 11: What Other Interests Do Research Companies Have?

In seeking to understand the function of research organizations, we need to understand that they too, like radio stations, are businesses. As such, they must sell products to new customers as well as enhance their product line to keep existing customers. Rarely will any research company advise you that you only need their services once. The most desirable circumstance is to develop an ongoing relationship. I agree that an ongoing policy will better benefit the station in the long run. The caution here is to not be "sold" on the next product offered by the research company simply because it attests to being "new and improved".

My favorite breakfast cereal has been "new and improved" about ten times over the years and still tastes the same to me as it did in 1975.

Selecting a research project "cafeteria style" (depending on what's on the menu from month to month) ultimately may actually detract from the credibility of the research. As in the case of radio ratings, selecting one policy that works and stick with it will give a more consistent long-term view of the station rather than criss-crossing a variety of methodology which could frequently give misleading and incomplete information, aside from being costly.

In an industry where there is a constant mingling of media interests, it is not uncommon to see research companies getting involved in providing additional goods and services above and beyond the initial agreement to conduct some form of audience research. Today, many research companies either provide a full range of programming or provide access to vendors who can contact the station to pitch their services. This can also include actual station consultants to work with the station on adjusting its programming needs in compliance with the outcome of the research. Most contemporary research companies operate with the utmost honor and in an atmosphere of respect, good business conduct, and integrity.

Concern should be focused, however, upon those occasions where the results of a research project leads that company to an opportunity to pitch to the station additional services at additional cost to address the station needs as determined by the research. Their expanded product-line often includes providing an actual, complete, new format.

Similar conflicts might appear to also exist at research companies who distribute or sell promotional items or programming assistance services such as music scheduling systems. Clearly, a research company should be able to offer its clients some help as they address the legitimate concerns and needs which the research may have uncovered. An alarm should sound when the results of the project almost perfectly define a specific service, format, or policy which they also have for sale in their next tier of station assistance packages.

The goal of doctors is to cure all disease, thereby putting themselves out of business.

-so-

Research companies achieve desired results with client stations and become obsolete.

I suggest that this is NOT the way it happens, so the "new and improved" product-line extensions continue to be available for stations. The hope is for legitimate research organizations to be vigilant of where to draw the line at potentially taking advantage of and exploiting a station's vulnerability and selling them unnecessary products and services not required. At some point the credibility of the quality of their research can be questioned by virtue of their over-involvement in the selling and merchandising other products.

Chapter 12: Working with a Consultant

The term "consultant" has been used in radio for several decades. I can't really recall exactly when the term became popular but I suspect that in the 1960's, Top 40 radio began to make incredible inroads into most American markets. Many of the Top 40 station took their "role models" from successful major market stations. Some of the names that surfaced during this era were the likes of Todd Storz and Bill Drake. Their particular programming formula was adapted to hundreds of stations by dozens of "consultants" who seemed to have evolved during this era as Program Directors or Air Talent. As America was ready for the excitement and uniqueness of Top 40 radio, many of the "formula" stations enjoyed tremendous success, and thereby the credit fell to the consultants who had worked with them.

Since then, there has developed a corps of professional broadcasting consultants, generally specializing in specific formats although there are a few mega-companies to have a one-stop-shopping approach. The advantage of having many different consultants within one company is their ability to combine research, marketing, and administrative resources. I suspect that there is also an advantage in having access to other consultants opinions and ideas when working with a problem station. The disadvantage may be that the company handles too many clients and may be more impersonal in their style and have less time to invest in each stations individual needs.

In any event, Consultants (now, I'll spell it with a capital "C") have become a regular feature on the radio scene with some spectacular success stories and some dismal failures (which you will not likely hear about). As explained earlier in this book, I began consulting radio stations following over 20 years of being a Program Director and On Air Personality. It wasn't something I just woke up one day and decided to do. In fact it happen inside-out. As I continued in whatever position I had at the time, former employers and acquaintances in radio began asking me for my opinion about what they should do in a particular situation. The advice given ad been developed through my many years and many formats worth of personal experiences. Many of my suggestions did prove valuable and rewarding to the stations. At this point I decided that all I needed to do to technically be a consultant was to charge a fee for my services.

Consultants generally begin their practices by having some specific area of expertise, usually in a format or demographic. As radio has splintered into so many different formats, the spectrum of experienced Consultants has likewise grown. With over 10,000 commercial radio stations in the United States, it is impractical to believe that every station can employ a full-time Programming expert as part of their local staff. It may be possible, however, to hire (or-outsource) a Consultant, who on a regular basis, has dialog and an exchange of communication with the less-experiences local Program Director. The Consultant's primary advantage is the ability watch multiple markets and share that information with local Programmers who, by the nature of their position, remain anchored in their local market. I think of a good Consultant as being a facilitator, a middle-person, exchanging ideas and providing resources to client stations. Consultants also have the advantage of experiencing the evolution of new ideas (and failures) in many different markets, whereas the local Programmer may only be witness to one.

The best role of a Consultant is as a third party. Another set of eyes and ears, who may impartially evaluate the client station and its personnel. Consultants are mostly removed from the day-to-day influences that taint the opinions of those who work there on a daily basis. Because the Consultant doesn't know or care about the various personal influences which may impact the sound and the effectiveness of the station, judgements can be made impartially. Since the listeners don't much care about what the personal influences are as well, a Consultant is more like a listener than a staff member.

It would be correct to assume that Consultants have had a hand in determining hiring and firing issues. To the degree that thousands of jobs have been lost due to Consultant's decisions would probably be true. Those victims have not probably saved a warm spot in their heart for the "Consultant who fired me". On the other hand, radio stations, as businesses must succeed or fail overall regardless of the feelings or situation of one employee. More sweeping changes may also result from the Consultant's appraisal, including a format change which may involve dismissal of an entire staff and/or the dismantling of years of work in the old format. It would also be fair to say that Consultants have been the "fall guy" and given responsibility for decisions NOT necessarily made by them. The "good cop-bad cop" philosophy has taken it's toll on the image of Consultants. As mentioned earlier, a presumed advantage of an impartial consultant is the distance from the market and lack of influence by local factors. On the other hand, some attention and compassion for the local market, it's citizens, and the station staff might also have a place. No doubt, the talent and ideas of many worthwhile employees went un-noticed while management was too busy listening to a Consultant.

When hiring or thinking about hiring a Consultant...like anything else check references, success stories, and take your time. A personal meeting with the Consultant is imperative since they will work intimately with the staff.

A good Program Director will acknowledge the need for a consultant as a resource and tool to use against the competition rather than a threat to his/her job. For this reason, choosing a Consultant should involve the input of the Program Director. In situations where a Consultant is "inflicted" upon an unsuspecting Program Director, chances are there are ulterior motives in place known only to upper management. Be cautious, however, occasionally bringing in a Consultant generates rumors in the market about staff and format changes, particularly if the Consultant has a strong identity with a format other than that which the station currently programs.

When first opening MOR Media, I sought to work exclusively in the area of Adult Standards music and older demographics. It seemed that most Consultants were scrambling for the "Hot, Young" demographics, while stations attracting the 45+ year olds were pretty much left to their own devices. Having grown up around Adult music and having been the youngest member of the staff at some of my earlier stations, I had (what I thought) was a fairly extensive working knowledge of how an Adult Standards station should sound. I quickly found several client stations who needed some direction in their Adult programming since many were working with young staffs who did not have experience in the format. This MOR Media was born. Later, I found the same qualitative material applied to Country listening adults as did non-Country, so we began The Country Company to develop adult demographics in the Country format. This tactic was similarly successful as it came at a time when Country ratings were deteriorating nationally, and there was increased interest in programming more Country "Oldies". From this need, expressed by dozens of station, generated the motivation to produce our syndicated "Country Oldies Show". To prove the validity of the "Oldies" effort, I had the fortune to place the program on New York's Country station, WYNY. I did the show "live" every Sunday night for over a year with excellent ratings results.

Similarly, although not providing a syndicated program, many Consultants do provide the necessary materials to allow a client station to carry-out the directions given. It's one thing to say, "Here's your song list, now go find them", rather than, "Here are the songs, play them." Frequently, Consultants attend national conventions and conferences and have established a network of relationships with every type of radio broadcasting supplier. The list includes syndicators, networks, sports, jingle companies, music libraries, promotional materials, advertising companies, and research organizations. A good Consultant should be able to connect your station with just about any of its needs, including technology and personnel.

Maybe there's still a lot of pseudo-Consultants out there, but I don't believe they enjoy the exposure they once received. By pseudo-Consultant I mean an unemployed P.D. or Air talent who got some cards printed and called himself a Consultant while waiting for the next full-time job to materialize.

During a period of time when good Consultants were in demand, and their price tag was beyond the reach of many medium and small stations, the pseudo-Consultants used the opportunity to make some fast money. Many actually had some success and eventually became real Consultants because they quickly learned what was necessary to do the job. It is clearly more than phone calls and free airline tickets to other cities.

Many of the other Consultants I have come to know, personally, throughout the years a very bright and perceptive people. They quickly study a situation and know when and when not to take action. The very best are the ones who can write well, since expressing ideas in writing is a most effective way to convey effective explanations and strategies. A written analysis is something tangible that can be used to document the need to take a course of action, should authorization be required from officers or owners. A Consultant's other favorable characteristics should also include the ability to understand and operate a variety of industry data programs including music scheduling software, automation systems, and ratings analysis. The ability to work with these programs also enhances the written report to station management, because it can provide additional documentation, facts, and figures in support of a plan of action.

Now that multiple ownership of many stations is a reality, many companies are utilizing Consultants on a regular basis to "fill-in" the expertise and experience lost by downsizing the combined station operation. It's now also possible for a Consultant to work with a variety of stations in a similar format throughout a company owning many stations. For example, a company today may own, say, 50 stations, but only need once consultant to work with 12 of them in the Country format. Obviously, the combined resources of a good Consultant and 12 stations within the same company can be a formidable opponent to their competitors in their respective markets.

I have thoroughly enjoyed Consulting. Not only because it's fun and rewarding participate in successful strategies, but because my many years at so many stations has endowed me with knowledge beyond that which I can apply to a single situation. Since each station and each market is different, I call upon many layers of personal experience in seeking a solution. Somewhere in my brain there is archived just about every radio experience I ever had. Sometime's it surprises me when I find a solution to one of today's radio problems in a 20 year old experience.

Use a Consultant wisely. Determine your expectations and limitations. Let the Consultant know what their role will be and with whom they should and should not be working. Above all, explain to the staff who the Consultant is, the background, and the role alongside the staff, and the nature of the working relationship.

Chapter 13: Arbitron Ratings

There has probably already been enough written about Arbitron, the ratings service. However, I'm trying to cover all bases in this book, especially for Program Directors who are attempting to learn things they might have missed during their prior training or to refresh their memories about information that they might have forgotten about or not fully understood when it was first learned. Although there have been and are alternative audience measurement companies, a fundamental understanding of Arbitron basics and language provides a good place to start understanding the process. I'm going to use the example of Arbitron as the ratings service simply because to date, it remains the most used and because the terminology that is used generally is the same terminology that is used in other ratings services as well.

If a station is a full-fledged Arbitron subscribing radio station, then Arbitron itself will provide you with ample explanations, documentation, and training to interpret and understand the information they provide. There are also periodic seminars and lessons at various broadcasting conventions to explain in detail Arbitron terminology and methodology.

If not yet an Arbitron subscriber, but plan to become one, Arbitron provides a comprehensive training period for the staff to get acquainted with their techniques. In this chapter, let's briefly review some of the key terms that are important to know and understand about Arbitron as it relates specifically to programming and to information a Program Director can pass along to members of the air staff so they can better understand.

It's not imperative that all members of any air staff completely understand every aspect of Arbitron. The sales aspects are useful only to understand the sales department at the station. It is helpful for staffers to understand the terminology and the procedures which underlie those on-the-air activities at the station that are designed to influence Arbitron diary keepers and rating services generally.

Here is a list and a narrative of the key terms that will be very helpful for air staff members to know and understand.

CUME - The cume of a radio station is an abbreviation for cumulative, which means the total audience, the body count, the absolute top number of different people that listen to a radio station. Every diary keeper who listens to a radio station for enough time to give the station credit for one quarter-hour of listening during a survey period may be considered a cume person. Cume is sheer numbers of people. What cume tells you is how many potential listeners you have reached during the listening survey period. It does not tell you the quality of the listening, nor how long they listened, or whether they liked what they heard.

Compare cume to the number of shoppers that go into a supermarket. Let's imagine the station has no listeners and the supermarket has no shoppers. When the station comes on the air, it is the same as opening the doors to the supermarket. As the listeners tune in the radio, so do the shoppers enter the store. For every shopper that enters the store, the store is credited with a cume of one person. For every listener that tunes his radio to that radio station, the station is credited with a cume of one person.

At the end of the survey period, the total number of people who have gone through the doors of the supermarket, regardless of whether they bought anything or how long they stayed, would be that store's total cume. Similarly, all of the listeners who came to the radio station to listen, whether they stayed long, bought anything, liked what they heard, can still each be counted as a cume person one time each.

If the shoppers in the supermarket or the listeners of the radio station come back a second day, or a third day, or a tenth day, or every day during the survey period, they can still only be counted one time. Each cume person is one smiling face no more\ no less and can be counted only one time. The length of time and the quality of their listening habits or shopping habits are determined by other data in the survey.

Using easy-to-remember figures, if a thousand people listened to a radio station -- a thousand different people, a thousand different smiling faces, whether male or female, a thousand different social security numbers -- then the station cumed a thousand people. Cume is useful in determining whether a station is effectively asking people to listen. It's called Sampling. Cume is often an indication of the total radio audience inclination to sample/try the station. Cume can be indicative of progress or lack of progress after a radio station has launched a major promotional, visibility or advertising campaign to generate new listenership. It can tell whether the radio station is effectively attracting new people; to the store at least for a short visit.

Once you've established the sampling or cume of the radio station is increasing, make sure the product being sampled is interesting enough to hold the attention of the audience. In our supermarket, a shopper may go into the store, but if the shelves are in disarray, the selection is poor, the lights dim, and prices are too high, she will exit. Although the store counts that person as a cume, and has asked the person to sample shopping in that establishment, the customer is not likely to return. They found the product to be inferior and not worth spending any more time.

A cume building campaign is needed to first establish or turn around a radio station. Get as many people listening as you can! That's why external station promotion, although it may be a luxury, it is the only way to access people that are not already listeners. Cume building campaigns can be economically generated by simply passing out flyers at supermarkets, by trading television or newspaper ads, billboards, cable, door-to-door canvassing. Some stations put staff members on telephones after their shifts and call numbers randomly out of a telephone book and literally ask people to listen. A successful cume campaign is a campaign which asks people to listen ... and actually gets them to do it.

Cume becomes more important when the station can successfully translate the listeners who cume the station into listeners who will stay with the station over extended periods of time. That gets us to our next term which is...

AVERAGE QUARTER HOURS (AQH)-The building block measurement used by Arbitron is the quarter hour. To gain a Quarter-Hours worth of listening, a person who cumes the station (listens to it), must verify and document (in a ratings diary) evidence they listened for at least five minutes within any particular quarter-hour period of the broadcast day. Those quarter-hour periods are identical to clock quarter-hours:

Top of the Hour	:00----	:15 minutes after
	:15----	:30 minutes after
	:30----	:45 minutes after
	:45----	:00 top of the hour

If listeners writes down that they began and stopped listening for any period that covers five minutes completely within any of these four segments, then the radio station gets credit for **One Quarter Hour** building block. If that same listener listens for two documented quarter-hours, then the station gets credit for **Two Quarter Hours** and so on. Even though a station can "cume" a listener only once, the number of quarter hours to be accumulated by long listening can vary greatly from listener to listener. Therefore, it is to the stations advantage to not only assemble as many different listener as it can, but more importantly, keep them listening for long periods of time to acquire additional quarter-hours.

If a listener tunes in for a while in the morning, turns off the radio, then turns it on later in the same day, the quarter hours will continue to be added to the stations total, even though this listener can still only be counted once as cume. For this reason, stations should continuously cross-promote to other events and other dayparts in other times of the day to continuously re-invite the listener to tune in several different times. The same is true from day to day. So, if a listener turns on the station on Monday morning, and documents listening for five minutes within a quarter hour period, then listens at the same time every morning through Friday, then the station gets credit for Five Quarter Hours even though this listener can only account for One cume.

A single cume listener, therefore, may account for dozens and dozens of quarter-hours during the rating period. The mechanics and mathematics of cuming new listeners, then translating them into listeners who listen for extended periods of time and who return to the station repeatedly become the dynamics by which ratings are created. The higher the cume a station has, the more opportunities it will have to extend listening from each individual. In its simplest form:

$$1 \text{ cume listener} \times 5 \text{ Quarter Hours} = 5 \text{ Quarter Hours}$$

-OR-

$$5 \text{ cume listeners} \times 1 \text{ Quarter Hour} = 5 \text{ Quarter Hours}$$

The best scenario, however involves multiples of both cume and quarter hours working together...

$$5 \text{ cume listeners} \times 5 \text{ Quarter Hours} = 25 \text{ Quarter Hours (!)}$$

To be counted as cume, a listener MUST listen for at least one quarter-hour, so for every cume person, the station automatically gets credit for at least one quarter hour, therefore, high cuming stations have a built-in advantage in having at least those single quarter hours, even if they fail to keep listeners very long. But realistically, it's the extended listening that develops the number of quarter-hour building blocks, which eventually determine a station's ultimate ratings success. The type of promotions that generate cume are promotions which literally ask people to listen to the station or to ask the non-listener to listen to the station. Cume campaigns use television, billboards, newspaper ads. Cume campaigns and cume promotions/building cume by necessity need to take place outside the radio station through media other than the station itself.

The only way a station can generate cume from its own listenership is by the tell-a-friend type of attitude where existing listeners are encouraged to share information about the station with people who don't listen in hopes that they will be converted.

The Average Quarter Hours the radio station generates are broken down into the same demographic cells as the station is generally: male, female, time of day, and age...all important elements in composing the stations ratings profile.

For most practical applications, the Quarter Hour is the basic building block and accumulating them becomes the full time job for the station staff and management. The type of activities, the format and promotions the station programs directly affects quarter-hour acquisition.



The most effective tool to achieve extended listening is Time Targets. A time target is anything you say or do on the air that invites the listener to either listen longer or to listen-in at another time. Another chapter deals exclusively with Time Targets, but as an integral part of audience building, a brief explanation here is necessary. Time targeting includes pre-promotion of upcoming songs, promoting a personality in another daypart, promoting an information event, i.e. Weather, News, Sports. A time target is most effective when promoting a BENEFIT to the listener. The pleasure of a favorite song, the satisfaction of current information are all important targets. Contests usually involve a potential for an immediate and tangible BENEFIT to the listener and for that reason are extremely valuable Time Targets. Contests that can be interestingly spread out over several quarter-hours are even more effective quarter-hour builders.

ALL ABOARD!

How announcers are instructed regarding "keep the listener listening" is the most valuable direction they can get. All other programming elements should be addressed to that purpose whether it be music, humor, information, or contests. It's helpful for the announcers to understand the importance of this end result, but is often lacking in management direction.

Explain AVERAGE QUARTER HOUR to the air staff, it's helpful to know what it is. They are responsible for the execution of quarter-hour building promotions. Excellent quarter-hour building promotions are the sort of promotions that extend listenership like:

- 1. the amount of money in the jackpot is increased by a certain amount each hour, or**
- 2. adding a new word to the mystery phrase, or**
- 3. giving an additional clue to the days question**

All of these generate continued interest and continued listening which extends quarter-hours. If the air staff understands this, then they are motivated to be interesting and clever in convincing the audience to stick around. As far as a radio stations air staff is concerned, generating cume and quarter hours and knowing the types of promotions that do each is a most important piece of information.

The other term which comes into play with respect to the air staff is TSL (Time Spent Listening), a term which is self descriptive. The Time Spent Listening tables from Arbitron can tell the interpreter of the data how long specific listeners stay with the station during the total listening day or during each specific day part. Time Spent Listening is a product of extended quarter hours. Stations that achieve substantial quarter-hours with their listeners generally have long Time Spent Listening, too. Ironically, some of the stations with the highest time spent listening end up with the lowest ratings because these are stations that program a very specialized type of radio program and have a very small cume. Religious stations, ethnic, foreign language, special interests, tend to generate high time spent listening because their audience generally listens to no other station. Even though the cume is small, they have enormous quarter-hours. The combination of the two do not generate a high rating for the station, but you can see on a national level, these stations have very, very high time spent listening ratios. So it's a deceptive. **A good TSL for any station is really only significant when accompanied by substantial cume.**

Sometimes, it can be helpful to a Program Director (in reviewing ratings), to see how TSL may vary from one daypart to another. These figures may be helpful in determining whether air talent is effective. If the overall staff performs well on the TSL, but certain times of the day or certain personalities whose TSL is noticeably less, could be considered a warning signal and some additional direction may be necessary to take corrective measures.

Otherwise, Time Spent Listening is a secondary function to Cume and Average Quarter Hours. Those are the "big three" in Arbitron terms needing interpretation to the air staff. These are active terms that explain what is going on while it is going on.

WHEN THE ARBITRON BOOK ARRIVES

There are a few interpretive terms used by Arbitron, which are specifically used when analyzing the results of a rating book and those terms (again) are:

1. CUME - Find the cume number for the selected station. Under total persons, the cume figures should be the first thing you look at in the results of a rating period. This figure shows how many people sampled each radio station during the survey period or during the daypart or in the demographic.

2. SHARE - Share is interesting because share is actually a percent of a percent. Let me explain. Going back to our example of shoppers in the supermarket, let's say there was a man with a clipboard taking a survey inside of the store. He, therefore, could only survey the people who came into the store. If he stayed inside the store, it would be impossible for him to take a survey of all the other citizens in town. In radio ratings, share is arrived at as a percentage only of the people in the survey area that were listening to a radio at the time. Share is not representative of the total population, but only of the population that is listening. Because radio listening changes from hour to hour, day to day, week to week during a survey period, then the total number of listeners who comprise the persons using radio (PUR) at a time also fluctuates. Let me repeat, **a share expressed in a percentage, is a percentage of the persons using radio not the population of the survey area.**

If a radio station has a 7.1 share, that means that 7.1 percent of the persons using radio during the survey period (or the time period or demographic being examined) were listening to that station. Because share is a product of the amount of audience that is available at any given hour of the day, the percentages of share can change drastically from one part of the day to another and can often give misleading data about listening.

For example: Let's say there are 10,000 people listening to the radio in the morning in a particular small city.

1,000 of them listen to the morning show. But the population of the city might be...50,000 people but only...
10,000 are listening to the radio, and only...
1,000 are listening to this station (or 10% of them).

Therefore, 10% of the persons using radio is interpreted as a 10.0 share of the audience.

On the other hand, late at night when the listening levels traditionally are lower in the same city of...

50,000 people, but only ...
1,000 people are listening to radio and...
this station may only have...
100 listeners (or 10% of them)

So it's still a 10.0 share, but the audience is only 1/10th of what it was in the morning.

Therefore when explaining share it is also necessary to explain the cume and the quarter hours that establish it.

3. RATING - The share figure of the radio station mathematically extended to represent the total population of the community. The rating figure is gaining in popularity because it expresses the station's listenership in terms that are easy to understand to the lay person, or not-necessarily-media-wise advertisers. A station's rating is always a higher figure than its share. This is because it assumes that if the number of people in the ratings sample listen to the station in a certain proportion, then theoretically, this same percentage can be overlaid on the population of the survey area generally to come up with the rating figure.

Other interesting items to watch for in an Arbitron ratings quarterly report is the hour by hour listening where you can track how the station's audience changes from hour to hour. If you map this information over extended periods of time from rating period to rating period, you can start to notice perceptible dips or jumps in listening during certain hours of the day. Knowing this can be helpful in programming during weak hours to help increase listenership or design a promotion specifically to run during that weaker hour. From a Sales point of view, you can use stronger showing hours to justify getting higher advertising rates for those hours because the listening levels are traditionally higher.

ROLLING AVERAGES

The previous information has been specifically about Arbitron quarterly reports, "the book," which comes out four times per year. Oddly enough, there are what are known as monthly ratings which are not really that at all. They are rolling averages of three one-month periods. These reports are only issued monthly. So when a station receives its monthlies, what it is actually getting is a three month figure with the most recent month just completed added to the average and the oldest month dropped off.

For instance:

A station will get a rolling average for January, February and March, this data will be given to the station as a monthly figure sometime during the middle of April.

A month later, in the middle of May, the station will get a new monthly report that will drop off January and include February, March, and the new month of April.

In June the station gets another monthly report that has dropped off the February figures and averaged March, April and May.

And so it goes, continuously adding the new month and dropping the oldest.

The term "rolling average" describes monthly reports. If a station has a good month, those figures can inflate the rolling average figures and give the a deceptively euphoric feeling of success. Several months later, when the good month drops off, the station gets a big letdown. The ratings appear to drop. I frankly wish there were no rolling averages. It's nice to see how you're doing, but because of the high potential for fluctuations in the mathematics of rolling averages, I don't find them to be a good programming tool and would rather use some more immediate type of direct in-market research to gauge a stations monthly success than by using Arbitron monthly rolling average reports.

This monthly rolling average data is frequently misused and stations have made important decisions and ultimately critical mistakes based upon rolling average performance rather than riding out the storm and basing the stations progress on a series of quarterly reports. Arbitron and Other ratings services spend countless hours, days, and years developing their methodology and their mathematics, refining and sophisticating them even as you read this book. But some basic common language which conveys the essence of what is going on with station ratings to the members of the air staff is an overlooked piece of information. When properly understood, it can add meaning, importance, and impact to the promotions on the air and the way the station is programmed. The air staff should feel they are a part of a process whereby they can affect the person filling out the ratings diary by properly executing the programming opportunities that have been designed for that purpose. Anyone seriously interested in programming at a major market level or beyond really needs to participate in a professional level training course given by the ratings companies as well as participate in, subscribe to, or learn from other experts in the field. There are many who have taken the audience measurements statistics to new heights by sophisticated interpretive techniques and by applying additional information and insight to factor more creative meaning into the raw ratings data.

Chapter 14: The Station Identity

No matter what the format is, what kind of music you play, what city you're in, or how many competitors you have, the one thing that is absolutely necessary for the successful business operation of a radio station is to establish an identity. The radio station's identity needs to be a combination of all the things a station is to its listeners, synthesized into one or two highly identifiable elements. A station identity is the one thing that, when people see it or hear it, or think of the call letters of the radio station, they have essentially a snap shot of the station itself. Station identity can be obtained primarily through what is given to the listeners in terms of programming.

One of the things that leads to effective station identity is consistency. Develop and utilize slogans, sayings, ways of doing things and consistent programming so the audience is exposed to the station's identity on a day-in, day-out basis. There should be a thread of familiarity and similarity that runs through a radio station's sound no matter what time of day or night the listener chooses to tune in. Many programming elements can vary from hour-to-hour or from day-to-day, but there should still be something familiar -- something the audience can't quite put their finger on -- but something that says to them that this station is different, that it's unique and has an identity all its own.

Once you have achieved the identity of the radio station on the air through the use of slogans, phrases or consistent terminology; whether you use it in newscasts, or announcer's material, you reinforce that on the outside of the radio station by using those same identifying slogans and statements in newspaper ads or in television spots or on bumper stickers or on billboards.

Internally, the radio station in its day-to-day function as a business also needs to be consistent. The station should have:

- business cards...
- envelopes and letterhead...
- sales presentation folders...
- internal station signs...
- signs at remotes...
- banners carried at events...
- station vehicles...
- ...all should reflect the same visual identity.

Many radio stations present highly conflicting identities simply because they did not feel it was worth the effort or the expense to convert from old identities to new ones. The kind of station identity that works is the kind that you build from consistency. The image you project is something that cannot be bought, it can only be developed and built through careful reinforcement of the idea that you wish to project to listeners. You simply cannot do this if you break the listeners' focus with a variety of different identifying features for the station.

Here are examples of identities a station can have. Develop an identity immediately:

- 1. A station can have an identity as being the fun radio station.** Carry this fun image through by the music that you play. Reinforce this fun image through the types of personalities who are on the air and the nature of materials they talk about. Develop a fun image with clever contests, with more tongue-and-cheek humor, with perhaps a station mascot or image which is humorous. Have feature material or special programming that indicates you are a station that likes to have fun. Contests should be fun and taken lightly, requiring less effort to win but more entertaining in their operation. This is a terrific identity if you have a very structured format competitor.
- 2. A station can develop a News and Information identity.** This is done not only by providing an excellent news and information product, but by constantly reminding the audience during the music programs that they are only moments away from one of the basic information elements. Don't forget weekends, overnight, and late evenings, when customarily you do not have access to many of the information elements, you should still be talking about them. If you have a station identity, talk about it even when not doing it. If you have a music identity, then talk about the music when you don't happen to be playing it. If you have a news, traffic, information image, talk about that image in breaks between songs.
- 3. A contest image,** easily reinforced with newspaper ads, with dollar signs, with lists of prizes, talk about a contest even when not running one.
- 4. Public Service image.** Identity takes on a more general approach because it is hard to be too specific when serving the entire population of the market. Therefore, give as many specific examples of what Public Service activities the station is participating in at the time.

Reinforce that verbally on the air and in outside media.

For example: If you are the station that helps with the Easter Seals telethon, help with the telethon, promote it on the air, and then tell the audience after the fact what you had done to reinforce that image. If the station works on a particular fund raiser for some sort of other event, similarly, participate in the event, promote the participation, then after the event, brag about it. Also, if you are looking for a Public Service, public affairs image, project your station ahead two or three weeks or a month to things you are going to be participating in to start the anticipation.

It is also very important that if you have built a Public Service image, continue to remind the Public Service agencies themselves, as well as government leaders, and persons with similar civic responsibility of the station participation so they can help by word of mouth to project the stations identity.

5. In a few cases, some stations have managed to make a good business effort out of a somewhat **negative identity**. This mostly has to do with music programming that runs contrary to popular taste. There are stations around the country that are making good money selling advertising while at the same time playing extremely distasteful music, announcers using offensive and off-color material or by being a blatantly obtrusive radio station through their advertising techniques. But, it sells, and in a business sense, it works.

There are other identities, so look at the competitors. Start a list on paper and see if you can determine what the identity is of each competing radio station.

Here's a list of some identities. (Good and Bad)

- | | |
|---------------------|--------------------------|
| A. News | H. Most Changeable |
| B. Sports | I. Rinky-Dink, Cheapest |
| C. Contest | J. Ethnic |
| D. Old Folks | K. Been There Forever |
| E. Teenage | L. Visible |
| F. Community Minded | M. Invisible |
| G. Most Prestigious | N. Everyone grew up with |

If you cannot identify or come up with a short precise identity of each station in each market, then you might well imagine that those stations are vulnerable. Stations that have no identity are subject to the worst type of vulnerability. Those are the stations the listeners will fail to remember. Those are the stations the listeners forget easily. These are the stations that have not conveyed an image of consistency and have left the listener confused.

Sometimes, simply by establishing radio station identity, you can win. In memory training courses offered by memory professionals, they'll utilize systems from word association to making absurd connections between the thing to be remembered and some other visual imagery. Establishing an identity for a radio station is no different than this. If the identity is different enough, if it is not to be confused with any other business or station in town, the audience will remember you because of the unique identity.

As you establish the identity of a radio station, it must be something to stay with for a while. Don't change a station's identity too frequently. Good strong station identity imagery is difficult to build. It is even more difficult to change. Many radio stations around the country are still identified by slogans and imagery that they projected to their listeners ten or twenty years ago.

You don't want to be the radio station that "used to be" something else.

Chances are, if listeners haven't given a station a try lately, they still think it's doing the same things it did the last time they listened and that might have been twenty years ago. When establishing station identity make a profound statement in the market. It's an excellent time to go out and test the effectiveness of station marketing techniques by doing some on the street research or focus groups of listeners to see if the intended message is penetrating the audience-at-large.

One final note on station imagery and identity. Many radio station audience survey companies rely upon the listener's memory in writing down ratings information in diaries or even in telephone interviews. Therefore, it is often better to be the station that is remembered than it is to be the one that is listened to. Certainly we would like to have everybody in town listening to our station, but if they don't happen to listen to us or at least don't listen very often, let's give them something to remember us by so that when they are asked to think of a station during a survey period, our station is the one they recall. Make the proper statement in identifying ourselves. As competitive broadcasters, our goal is to make sure it is OUR call letters that come to mind rather than our competitor's. Develop station identity, sell it, stick with it, and don't promise anything to an audience that you can't deliver on or off the air.

Chapter 15: Formats

When considering the commercial viability of a radio station, one of the primary requirements is to successfully operate the station within a marketable format. Once the decision has been made to either adjust existing programming or select a new approach, the next step is to go shopping for viable format alternatives. Sometimes this isn't as easy or obvious as it might seem.

Here are the most frequently made mistakes in selecting a station format:

1. Get on the bandwagon of "hot" formats.
2. Researching a demographic void in the market, then programming what you think that demographic needs/wants.
3. Getting in on a financial deal with a format/music supplier to switch to an economical format, or get swept along by changes within other stations in your broadcast organization.
4. Thinking that music is the format, ignoring personalities and information which may also need correcting.
5. Ignoring music and information when personalities may actually be considered by the audience to actually be the strongest element in the format.
6. Switch to a format preference of the owner's wife or relatives. (If this is the station you're in, get out!).

MUSIC FORMATS

There have always been different formats available for radio stations. Some of the same ones keep recurring, though they are re-defined from year to year. Here are some examples of the most common music formats, with a brief description of each one. This does not suppose that these are all formats, since there are many non-music formats, too. This list does not address presentation or non-music elements within each format.

1. **Contemporary popular music** by today's top recording artists, generally appealing to the young adult audience.
2. **Country music**, either contemporary or traditional ranging in demographic appeal from young adults to very old.
3. **Recent hits** from the past decade or so...largely the most highly visible and identifiable songs.
4. **Oldies**, songs at least a generation old.
5. **Dance or high energy music** often represents various urban preferences. Appeals to teens through young adults, often sharing with category #1.
6. **Ballads and soft easy listening music**. Familiar melodies by known artists.
7. **Adult music from non-rock background** includes MOR, Pop Standards.
8. **Specifically ethnic or urban music** targeted directly at a certain ethnic group. Often shares with category #3.
9. **Background easy listening**, mostly instrumental, non-foreground, can represent both newer or traditional selections. Here it's the sound not the song.
10. **Religious or inspirational**

These are general categories. These are the building blocks that make up the many combinations and hybrids in use at radio stations everywhere.

NON-MUSIC FORMATS

Among the non-music formats, the favorites seem to be:

1. **All talk.** Topical conversation, usually some combination of local and national, telephone participation, often can be used during some segments of an otherwise all-music station.
2. **All-News,** non-stop information, again a combination of national network and local resources.
3. **News-Talk.** Combination of 1 and 2. Usually divided by daypart.
4. **Sports.** Primary coverage of all aspects of sports from talk shows to play-by-play. Often sports coverage is included in the formula for station types 1, 2, or 3.
5. **Specialized information** including financial, agricultural, motivational, sales or merchandise opportunities.
6. **Religious** (often part of a religious music station).

Here's an example chart to use in doing market research in determining potential format voids:

Fill In Stations Who Own The Demo	D E M O G R A P H I C						
	12-17	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	+
WAAA (Rock)	XXXXXXXX	XXXXXXXX					
WBBB (CHR)		XXXXXXXX	XXXXXXXX				
WCCC (AC)		XXXXXXXX	XXXXXXXX	XXXXXXXX			
WDDD (MOR)					XXXXXXXX	XXXXXXXX	
WEEE (Gold)				XXXXXXXX			
WFFF (Ctry)				XXXXXXXX	XXXXXXXX		
WGGG (Talk)					XXXXXXXX	XXXXXXXX	
WHHH (BBand)						XXXXXXXX	XXXXXXXX
WIII (Lite)				XXXXXXXX			

On a chart like this, it becomes easy to see which stations are appealing to which demographics and where the voids are. Because we live in a highly market-conscious society, any sizeable demographic group, even though they may be in the numerical minority, can be marketed to and catered to successfully by a station appealing to their interests. If the station is marketed correctly, it should operate at a profit. This chart and other useful station blank forms are provided at the end of this book for station use in "The Forms Section".

Chapter 16: Finding a Format Niche

When searching for a new format in any given market, most broadcasters look at the other stations in the market to see how much of the market share each station/format commands. The prevailing mentality is that any new audience must come from gathering listeners from the other stations. In adopting this philosophy, there is an inherent admission that every listener in the market has already selected a station, they are a finite number, and the market shares of all stations combined will always add up to approximately the same number, allowing for some audience shifting from one station to another.

Imagine 1000 people have been invited and all attend a charity ball (in a community of 2500). The event will be held in a 50 room mansion. All being equal. There should be 20 people per room. As the party-goers roam around the house, their numbers, per room are constantly changing. Perhaps there are 100 people in the parlor where the piano player is, 50 in the bar, and 1 in the bathroom. Equating this to radio terms,

Parlor station has a.....10.0 share of audience
Bar station has a..... 5.0 share of audience
Bathroom station has a... .1 share of audience

Some people are in the hallways, not counted as rooms, and so the total room share is never 100 percent. As the 1000 people attending our party have been invited from a community of 2500 people, there are 1500 people outside the mansion, (in the community) who have not been invited to the party.

With the party example in mind, let's look at an anonymous radio market example from a recent Arbitron survey. The market chosen has a population of 500,000, which makes the math easier. Both Arbitron and common sense will tell you that there are always more people in the community than there are Persons Using Radio in the community, because there is always someone not listening to radio. In fact, some people NEVER listen to radio. Therefore, in this market example, the number of Persons Using Radio is less than 500,000. We'll look at Total audience 12+. That means all radio listeners in the market who are at least 12 years old.

#1 station	13.3 share	Country FM
#2 station	11.3 share	CHR FM
#3 station	8.6 share	AOR FM
#4 station	8.2 share	N/T AM
#5 station	7.5 share	AC FM
#6 station	7.1 share	Gold FM
#7 station	7.0 share	AC A/F
#8 station	4.8 share	AOR FM
#9 station	4.6 share	Country AM
#10 station	4.4 share	N/T AM
#11 station	2.8 share	ClscRockFM
#12 station	.3 share	Country AM

If we go looking for a format niche, we see the existing distribution is:

Country	18.2	Total share	3 stations
AC	14.5	Total share	2 stations
AOR	13.4	Total share	2 stations
N/T	12.6	Total share	2 stations
CHR	11.3		1 station
Gold	7.1		1 station
ClscRock	2.8		1 station

We can see there are some popular formats missing from the mix, mostly due to ethnic composition of the market or market size. There's no MOR, no Christian, no Urban, no Lite/EZ. Of course, no one would make a format switch based upon 12+ numbers (would they? No, so we'd have to look more deeply into the demographics in the market before saying we had successfully found a "hole". We might however, apply some common rationale by a series of questions or statements to consider from the above information.

1. This market likes Country, is there room for another station here, to take some shares away from #1 and knock off #9 & #12?
2. This market likes AC, is there room for another AC approach, taking audience from both #5 and #7 who are about tied and maybe force one of them off the format. Maybe that Classic Rocker could make a run at it.
3. This market likes AOR, but it's a tough sell with a narrow target, probably maxxed-out in here. Even a Classic Rocker for the leftovers.
4. News-Talk is HOT everywhere, could there be a stronger #2 AM in the format. Maybe that #12 AM Country might give it a try.

These are the mental gymnastics which start the format-switch thought process. The decision is not always based upon the ratings, but usually it is. The station revenue potential is an even greater impetus to a format switch, which is a by-product of ratings performance.

Here's something else to consider...and few station operators do.

Statistically, about 96% of the general population will listen to the radio within a week. This implies 4% will not. In any given Average Quarter-Hour, only 17-20% of the Persons Using Radio are listening, and 80-83% are not. Rather than look for a format niche exclusively within the existing format spectrum, consider developing a NEW product which may appeal the present NON-radio listener, create new motivations and programming to capitalize on the 80-83% who have, for one reason or another, decided to not listen.

This gets us back to the creative process and the question of research. Don;t be afraid to apply creativity to come up with something new for your market. Even a new, clever, fresh approach to an existing format has a possibility of success. Reach out to disenfranchised listeners with no particular station loyalty and create an exciting, new, local product for them. In some markets, the percentage of people without a radio station is significant. If the missing 4% of the population all began regularly listening to a station rated #8-#12 in our sample market, that station could move into the top 5.

Looking at existing shares and existing formats is not the only thing to consider when searching for a format niche. Sometimes it's what people are NOT listening to which may better tell the story.

Chapter 17: Changing Format

A Radio marketplace is an ever-changing environment with stations moving, shifting, and adjusting their formats, personalities, presentation, and emphasis in programming from different perspectives. Some stations will change personnel. Some will add more News. Some will change their music direction, while others will change their format, altogether. This creates new job openings as well as causes other stations in the same market to make the appropriate adjustments to their format.

For music-format stations, the music industry itself is extremely fluid. It creates new types of music that are HOT one year, but yet the next year are not. This creates the need for further adjustments in order that radio stations accurately reflect contemporary tastes. When this happens, there's just one, inevitable solution...a format change. The radio station will change its format and along with that, it may be required to change its personnel. One of the more traumatic experiences in the life of the radio personality or a Program Director occurs when management and ownership of a radio station have determined that the radio station is going to change format. What do you do?

A number of stations and station managements, in deciding to change format, generally have already made some decisions based upon experience they have in looking for a new format in the first place. So information regarding the availability of new personnel and the other dynamics of the impending new format generally have already been set by the time the format change decision is executed. Rarely does station management decide "...let's change format" and then goes out looking for the music, the consultant, the Program Director, and the air talent.

In most cases the format change is automatically accompanied by some of the tools necessary for implementation. In most cases this is either in the person of a consultant or a Program Director. Management often fails to acknowledge the flexibility and the range of talents existing employees have which is already available inside the station. Frequently, some loyal employees may continue to be loyal employees to the radio station and to the company and to the other people behind the scenes with whom they worked under the old format. In fact, they will likely continue to become the same valuable assets as they have been in the past toward the new formatic direction of the radio station. However, some managers still insist that severing all ties is the only way to go. I've occasionally sensed a sudden degree of paranoia by managers who may feel that at some point they will become victims of a mutiny by the old staff members. There's also the suggestion that there could be some sort of negative image created by former staff members who are unhappy with the format change and may project that to listeners and advertisers.

Knowing employees better up-front is the best way to anticipate their reaction and evaluate their involvement in the new format. General Managers and Program Directors need to spend more time getting to know, in-depth and at a much greater degree of thoroughness, each employee. When a manager knows each employee, whether an announcer, News person, or other staff position, there really is a much better feel about how much of a team player they're going to be when a major change, like a format switch, is going to happen. It's the fear of the unknown that creates the traumatic experiences and the need for massive layoffs and firings. It's also from the air talent point of view a traumatic experience because they have been comfortable in what they're doing, in many cases hired specifically to execute the old format. Now, with the new format coming, they are not really sure of exactly what their status is going to be. The period of uncertainty is probably the most uncomfortable time period in most air personalities' lives. It's the element of not knowing which raises fears and concerns. So many stations over the years have told employees there were not going to be any staff changes and no staff changes were anticipated. But even those assurances, verbally given, are not taken seriously. Historically, denial always precedes action and the words being said to comfort people to keep them calm or from doing something radical on the radio, are rarely effective.

Station format changes need to be executed quickly and swiftly. The only exception to this is in the case of a station sale, which by the nature of selling a radio station requires an extended period of time for the financing, legal maneuvering, and finally the length of time it takes for the approval by the FCC. During this extremely awkward period of time, incoming ownership is prohibited from contact with the existing employees (because this would assume that the sale has been approved and the FCC frowns on that). On the other hand, the outgoing ownership is in no position to offer any long-term arrangements, promises, or offers to existing employees. They have little to gain by making financial overtures to employees or to suggest that they apply to the new company at the appropriate time.

At these times, it's important for people employed in radio to have some sort of expanded income base. The rewards of working in radio can be great, but they can vanish very quickly with little or no warning and with no personal reflection upon one's ability. Have a savings account, avocation, talent work, or some other sort of outside interest which may be a profit center for you or your family. This doesn't suggest that a comfortable and secure career in radio is not possible, it just may not be practical to assume so.

Format changes and the rapidly changing, fluid circumstance of station ownership has added a high degree of uncertainty to employment prospects and length of employment in the industry. Companies can now own many more stations than previously. Even more multiple-ownership opportunities are planned for the near future. With the phenomenon of duopoly, whereby companies may own several stations within the same market, there clearly is a strong, sensible management case for cutting-back on staff to eliminate duplication of effort and function. Savings of this sort, however, tend primarily to be available in the office, rather than in the studio. Some on-the-air positions, like Production and News, may also become victims of efforts to eliminate duplication.

Be a keen observer. Watch what happens around you. When you see duopoly or changes in station ownership or format, it's a clue that tells you to come to a good understanding about your relationship with the management team. It's also a very good time for you to start hedging your bets by making sure your income and obligations are in order. Prepare to ride out the consequences should it turn out to negatively impact you.

If you're already in radio, remember when you first started to learn about radio? Remember all of the things that you used to do and all of the formats that you didn't particularly care for, but were obliged to work because they were required in the learning process? To be sure, the more flexible you are and the more format experience you have, the better able you are to ride out a format change. For this reason, broadcasters entering the industry should not be afraid of ANY format. Work AM or FM. Do News. Do Sports. Do Rock & Roll. Do MOR. Do Oldies. Do Country. Do any/every format you possibly can to gain knowledge of how that format works so you can put on a resume and more importantly...call upon that experience in the future.

Radio personalities in major markets at stations that have only done one format and are truly experts, in demand, and maintain that they have format integrity, do not represent most people employed in radio in all the other large, medium, and small markets around the country and world. Most broadcasters are generally average salaried, community oriented people who happen to be in the broadcasting industry. Nevertheless, they too can get caught in a format switch and will need to call upon all of their past knowledge about the new format to sustain themselves in the new format environment.

It's extremely important to school oneself by having actual hands-on experience with formats that may occur in your future in broadcasting.

Broadcasters who are now part of an AM-FM combo or Duopoly are already working in a multiple-format environment and should take advantage of that situation to learn about other format characteristics. Having another radio station just down the hall offers a convenient way to pick up a few pointers about another format. Study it's playlists, listen to it's music, and listen to the competition in the marketplace to have a better understanding about the types of formats available and how each is positioned to create its individual character. Knowledge of a format, the ability to execute it, the ability to present yourself as competent in the new format, and having a good relationship with your existing management are the first steps to survival. But more important is the ability to transfer that feeling of competence and confidence to a new Manager, P.D., or consultant during the time of a station's format change. That is really going to be the greatest asset you will have to survive the format change and possibly even prosper within the new format. The purpose of making a format switch is to move the station from a position of marginal success to a position of enhanced popularity and profitability.

To be a part of the new team offers the hope of being more successful than you were within the old format and can ultimately involve greater rewards. By staying with the company and the station, and making it a better station, you enhance your own income and professional growth.

Radio stations are not people, they are businesses some of us get very attached to. Sometimes we even assign them personalities. They are, however, just businesses, and as businesses they need to reflect the atmosphere of the marketplace and tap into the marketplace, financially. Many classic, traditional, legendary sets of call letters around the country have come and gone. They have lived and they have died with a reputation that cannot be tarnished because it is maintained in the memories of the listeners who fondly remember them. To cling to a set of call letters simply for the sake of its former status is pointless if the station cannot compete in the contemporary marketplace. To ardently defend a radio station simply on the basis of call letters and history is not a wise and prudent move.

If stations are going to continue their heritage, then they need to continue it in light of the contemporary changes that need to take place. When the time comes to let go, as if we lose a relative or a loved one, let go. Radio stations are not people. They do not live. They are much like our favorite Broadway shows, music groups, or restaurants. We surrounded them with visual impressions which we would like to hold forever, but know that this cannot be. Those in the industry who can move on, who can adapt, who can change, who can let go, and who can accept the new will be the survivors.

Chapter 18: Music Rotations

One of the more complicated and misunderstood areas of programming is determining the correct rotations of the music played on the air. Music policies range from a very tight playlist of a few selections that are heavily played for maximum exposure, to stations with massive record libraries where songs are heard every few weeks. There's a place for each type of a radio station and record rotation. For radio programmers working with very contemporary music, the speed of the promotional thrust and the incredibly brief popularity of hit records requires a music rotation pattern designed to exploit the image of the station as being on top of today's hit music scene. These same stations also know that when a song is over, it's really over and time to stop playing it. The greatest casualty factor of contemporary music are songs exposed to the public for a very brief time, enjoying intense daily exposure at peak popularity, then vanishing from the station's playlist altogether and the audience does not become familiar enough with the song to sustain any memorability.

In the days of Top 40 radio in the 50's, 60's and 70's, a station could get away with playing 40 or 50 songs over and over. The top songs stayed on the charts for 10, 12, 15 sometimes 20 weeks. They were on the station for prolonged periods of time in various rotation patterns, giving the audience an opportunity to become old friends with the music. Today's contemporary music is in and out so quickly, familiarity simply cannot develop. This situation is creating a potential music void down the line. Today's music will not become "golden oldies" in the same way that yesterday's Top 40 favorites are revered today.

Contemporary radio has created a generation of music meant for today only and which will NOT likely have another opportunity to be heard. Stations programming to adult audiences have the luxury of not needing to be trendy or contemporary in their music. They may play a wider selection of music and artists. Since they are not chart-conscious, they are not tightly constrained to play the most commercially marketable songs. Instead, they have latitude in choosing songs that they feel are more artistically correct for the format.

In the 1970's and 80's this happened a lot with country music. There were, of course, mainstay artists, whose current records were automatically played. These primary artists constituted an almost predictable percentage of the station's current playlist. This allowed the remainder of the available playlist positions to be divided among newer and lesser known artists, giving their material and their careers exposure. The flexibility afforded the format an opportunity to continue bringing in new artists who, a decade later, have become established as mainstays themselves. Because of this, country music has perhaps the widest range of known artists, both past and present, who share the same radio station.

Contemporary stations with short playlists have record company music research on their side, since each song that is selected for airplay has been tested, retested, auditorium tested, telephone tested, and market tested to the point that it's hard to go wrong by riding the crest of a song's popularity. Contemporary music has an additional boost these days -- Music Video. Often new music appears nationally as a music video before it plays on local radio. Today, music video technology has become a major factor in the promotion of contemporary music.

Stations that play a wider variety of more vintage music have no boost from record companies, since the artists are no longer contemporary figures. This chapter is primarily directed toward them. If your station has a very wide playlist and covers a music span of several decades, I hope you will find some useful information here. You probably won't read this stuff anywhere else, especially from heavily research oriented sources.

When radio stations were programmed from a combination of single records and LP cuts, most of the vinyl records themselves were in the studio. If each vinyl LP contains from 10 to 12 selections, a few square yards of shelving could literally hold 10,000 different selections. In the age of the broadcast cartridge, we are very often letting space mandate our format parameters. We have arrived at a mentality where each song gets its own separate tape cartridge, contributing to storage, filing, and cost concerns. A station may actually need 1500 to 2500 different selections to offer a complete representation of its intended format. To "cart" each individual selection can easily be cost prohibitive, unless management is convinced that such a large selection is necessary to market the station.

At a bulk purchase cost of approximately \$5 each, 1500 carts will cost about \$7,500.00. Some stations will think nothing of spending \$15,000 or \$20,000 for a company vehicle, an updated computer system, a new tape deck system for the production room, or even to remodel the lobby, and yet not find it prudent to commit the same size expenditure to music, which comprises 90% of the programming. The music is after all, the product.

Compact Disk players are now becoming commonplace in many stations, although most historical music is not available in CD form. Contemporary formats have made the transition to CD more rapidly, since it is the medium of choice for both promotion and retail distribution of new material. In the few circumstances where older material is becoming available on CD, only the Hit Singles or artist "best of" collections are available, depriving stations in those formats the "flavor" material necessary to complete their formatting needs.

Now, of course, a basic hard-disk audio storage system may cost about the same as 1500 tape carts, but here again, we're back to selecting a technology.

Here's an approach I personally think works best:

The best resource for determining the size and content of a record library is the knowledge and experience of the professional, mature broadcasters you hire.

There is no resource for music knowledge greater than the amassed capacity of a staff of professional, experienced broadcasters...NONE! Their ability, sensitivity, judgement, and taste can provide more insight into the viability of the music on the station than all of the auditorium or phone tested songs in contemporary radio. Know what resources you respect and go with those feelings. Let them guide you. Once the delicate decisions have been made regarding music selection:

How do you play them?

How can you effectively expose the music that will create the most favorable image for the station?

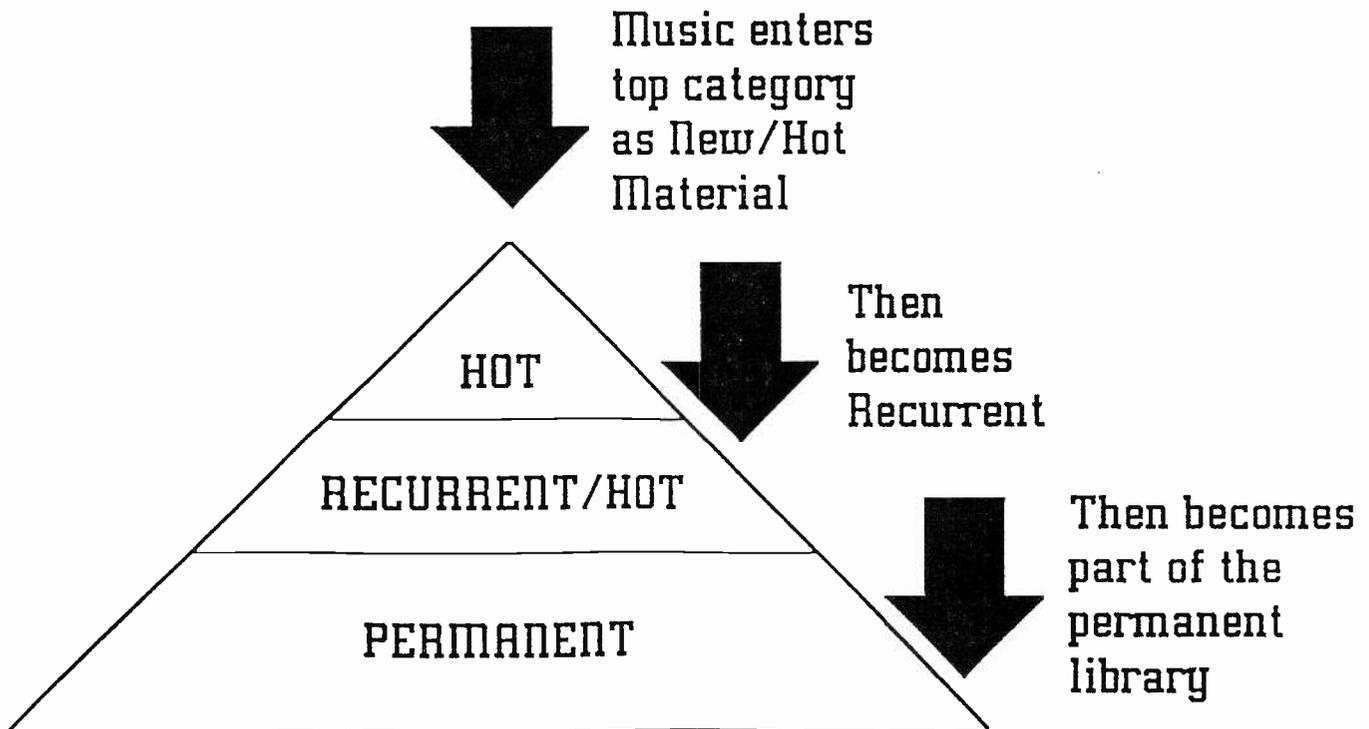
How can you make the music work for you?

Let's look for the answers to those questions by first exploring all the elements that come into play. Radio station active-airplay record libraries are designed for two basic types of rotations:

PYRAMID

The Pyramid type record library starts with a point at the top and works its way down to a broad base. The Pyramid record library is designed for stations that play some new releases and current records. These are the songs that are added at the top of the pyramid and that are played initially with higher repetition and shorter rotation so they can become known. Over time, if a record remains in the library, it slowly filters downward through the triangle and is gradually being played less and less often until it arrives at the lowest level of the triangle. Here it joins the bulk of the record library, which is the backbone of the overall, consistent sound of the station. Each song at the base of the triangle has earned a special place among the recognized features of the station. In fact, these songs have become the listeners' old friends. Pyramid libraries/playlists are typical in contemporary stations or stations where new music is frequently added and eventually becomes a permanent part of the overall library.

CHR & Country Example



RECTANGLE

The other type of music rotation library is the rectangle or box. In this case, the record library is divided evenly among the categories that the station plays. The only difference is in slightly varying rotations within each section of the rectangle. The definitions of each section of the rectangle may vary according to format.

Here's an example of a typical MOR Format music library. Consider each category as a pile of records. The next song played will usually be on the top of the pile in each of the categories. Music is scheduled horizontally, selecting in sequence from each of the available categories of music.

M O R Example

Male Vocals	Female Vocals	Group Vocals	Instrumentals
------------------------	--------------------------	-------------------------	----------------------

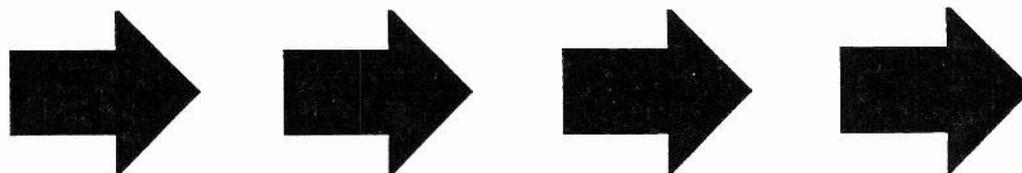


**Music library contains selections grouped by
Gender/Sound.**

In the case of Adult Contemporary stations, music categories usually represent musical eras or years. The scheduling sequence selects the next available song in each category, moving from one category to another for variety and balance.

Adult Contemporary Example

60's	70's	80's	New
X number of songs	X number of songs	X number of songs	



Music is scheduled by skimming across all categories of permanent song, grouped by Year/Sound.

The same rectangle philosophy applies regardless of how many songs there actually are in the record library. It's a matter of how many categories and how far down into each category the scheduling process is permitted to dig to find an appropriate selection.

ROTATION CYCLES

In other chapters we have discussed how radio stations need to have an identity. This identity is most often achieved through the music it programs. How to accomplish this is a radio basic... simple to understand, often difficult to implement.

1. Program management needs to determine what image the station projects musically.
2. It then classifies all the songs in the record library into varying degrees of that identity.
3. If songs do not fit that identity, they should not be in the record library.
4. To carry out the task of projecting the station's image and consistency, **all basic elements of the music library need to be represented in each hour** the station is on the air.
5. If the record library has been divided into 4 principle music categories, all of which are important to establishing and maintaining the identity of the station, then all four of those categories need to be represented in each hour.
6. In some dayparts, there's more time spent playing music than in others, so the important thing to keep in mind is the ratio of songs from one category to the other moving from hour to hour. If only 8 songs are played in morning drive:

3 of them need to be from the most highly identified station category.
2 of them need to be from the next highest category,
1 each from the next two categories
Finally, from the lower categories, select the "fill" or optional songs.

When programming other dayparts, where time permits playing 12-16 or more selections per hour, follow the same approximate ratio. During these hours, include more selections from lower categories, thereby creating a mood of greater variety.

SEGMENT OF TIME CYCLES

It is not necessary for every hour of the day to be identical. Using the Time Spent Listening figures from Arbitron, arrive at an estimate of how long each listener spends with the station on average during each day part. Audience listening habits are rarely broken down into neat, little, quarter-hour blocks like Arbitron. Therefore, arrange music rotations based upon a 70 minute, 90 minute, 2 hour, or whatever length of time determined by TSL. Once you have determined the listening cycle of each daypart on the radio station and how long listeners stay with the station during each of them, plug in the rotation ratios accordingly.

Break the age old theory of programming or developing a program clock that duplicates identically hour after hour.

If the station's Time Spent Listening cycle in morning drive consistently indicates the audience stays with you at the rate of about 45 minutes per morning, then you need to get maximum music exposure accomplished in a period of less than an hour. Conversely, during middays or at night when the audience may turn on the radio and leave it on for several hours (statistically verified through Arbitron TSL figures), then determine a music rotation cycle of a similar length or of a time period that is equally divisible into that long time spent listening segment.

Let's say you have a midday TSL of almost 3 hours. This could permit you to develop a three hour music cycle, two ninety minute music cycles, or three one hour music cycles, depending on how creative you intend to be. This is not exactly the most conventional of approaches for programming music, but for wide playlist stations with accurate TSL figures, it works! Not only does it work ratings wise, but the station sounds musically superior to competing stations playing a similar format trying to cram everything into chopped up hour by hour block/clock rotations.

As is frequently the case, stations with the best ratings successes have been stations which were musically superior to the competitors. Not just because of the songs played, but because of the way programming management successfully mapped out the overall music image that the station needed to project.

1. Divide the record library into a few categories, arranging them by priority. There really is no restriction on the number of categories you can have. By classifying the library into a few basic categories, ultimately additional category definitions will evolve based upon the makeup of the songs in the library.
2. Establish a category of vocal groups. Then, after taking a good look at the number of groups in the record library, subclassify them by male group, female group or duets.
3. Similarly, create a category of male vocalists, then subclassify them into male vocalists who represent different time periods or different musical styles.
4. Since each station has its own individual record library, it would be impossible for me to give an established set of categories, but trust me ... you'll recognize them the more you immerse yourself in the process of defining the station's music and all the songs in the entire library.

As in the case of determining our record library size by how many tape carts we can afford, we've become so computer-minded at radio stations that we are presently locked in a situation where most computer music scheduling systems are not equipped to handle music rotation patterns in excess of one hour. This is a real good question to ask when shopping around for a music scheduling system. It's a sensible one, also, because you can prove that listening does not happen on an hour by hour basis but over extended periods of time. It's the difference between assigning grades by a strict numerical percentage system or grading on a curve, in which case the full range of student grades is accommodated in the grading scale. The music scheduling system that can schedule "on a curve" will have a highly marketable product and you will have the advantage of knowing what to do with it.

Even though most music scheduling computer systems cannot accommodate this method of music programming, you can still easily use existing systems by figuring out the mathematics required to plug music rotation patterns into the hour-by-hour blocks provided by the existing scheduling system. It's somewhat more exacting to set up initially, but you'll probably agree that it's worth it when you hear the results.

Music is sound. Because it's sound, the overall image of any station needs to project a sound that is consistent and representative of the musical promises you make to the audience. The preponderance of today's radio stations classify their music by era, exact year, and chart positioning. None of these relates to the sound of the song. What do relate to the sound of the song are its sound qualities which include tempo, instrumentation, male, female, group, vocalization, and the subclassifications having to do with the musical style. One can identify whether a song is choral, country, acoustic, or orchestral by its sound rather than by knowing about the artist, the song, its chart position or the year it came out.

When setting up the music rotation system, determine both the variety and range of sound qualities that are available within the library. Give each sound quality a priority ranking. Then classify songs by those sound qualities. This should be your primary consideration. Reserve the non-sound characteristics as secondary. If two different songs represent a similar sound, even though they may have been recorded twenty years apart, it would be wrong to play them back to back. A music scheduling system with no sound priorities would not recognize this and this is the greatest flaw of computerized music scheduling. A computer can know everything about a song except what it sounds like. That's why assigning a musical identity must depend almost entirely upon the human element in charge of classifying the library song by song.

At the beginning of this chapter, I mentioned how space and economy seem to be a determining factor in the length or size of the record library (an undesirable, but ineluctable, reality). Then, consider this (and here's where some of my engineering friends cringe). If a station has a priority record library of 800 to 1000 carted selections, a simple good old-fashioned state of the art turntable and a few more yards of shelving can provide double or triple the number of selections to be played on the air. Considering that record albums, the LP variety, were state of the art technology for almost four decades, we might be oversophisticating ourselves to think that there cannot be a practical application for that technology in today's CD, DAT, Digital high tech radio studio.

Wide list radio stations play songs from the era in which high quality vinyl was produced. If there are still reasonably good high quality recordings available, use them, playing low rotation material from a turntable if it can greatly enhance the musical image and complexion of the radio station... which I believe it can.

If you're really lucky, you might be able to convince station management to go ahead and spring for the additional carts necessary to contain the whole record library. Also remember, you don't have to keep 100% of the library in the air studio all of the time. Some selections, or groups of selections can be kept on roll-around storage racks and moved in and out of the studio from the record library every few days or few weeks.

As a station Consultant, Program Director, and air talent, I must admit that music programming to me is an extremely intimate thing. It can't be reduced to mere technology and research. I have often been accused of being a "gut-reaction" Program Director because I prefer using people skills, intuition, and the knowledge and experience available to me from my own background and the backgrounds of my staff members over researched and tested material.

If I am called one of those gut-reaction programmers then I feel obliged to respond that programming music does not come from the gut, it comes from the heart and a radio station that has no heart will have a difficult, if not impossible, time establishing a lasting relationship with its listeners.

Chapter 19: Music Tempo

Except for length, the tempo of a record is one of the most important bits of programming information. Through the correct usage of tempo, the entire rhythm of the station can be altered from a slow-paced, easy listening approach to a hot contemporary delivery, often with essentially the same record library.

Typically, stations use SLOW-MEDIUM-FAST or DOWN-MEDIUM-UP designations for record tempos. Occasionally, there is a combination of two different tempos (usually when the Music Director can't make up his mind), like MED/FAST, etc. Determining the actual tempo of a song has usually been left up to the whim or daily mood of the person dubbing the music or typing the cart labels. Now, here's a foolproof way to get accurate tempo information for a station's music.

Long, long ago...before radio, a musician/scientist somewhere in history invented a METRONOME, a device that ticks like a clock and can be adjusted to tick at variable tempos. Later on, these ticks were assigned numerical values which in turn were put in writing on sheet music to give conductors or musicians the desired tempo of the composition. Well, wouldn't you know it, they're still making metronomes today, both mechanical and electronic. They can be purchased at any music store for about \$30-\$50 depending on the type you want. All metronomes have the same numerical scale that corresponds to the tempo of the ticking sound it makes.

Here's the best way to divide the music values to numbers:

<u>BEATS PER MINUTE</u>	<u>TEMPO</u>
40---72	1 (Slow)
76---100	2
100--132	3 (Medium)
132--168	4
176--208	5 (Fast)

When adding, dubbing, or carting the music, have someone (with a slight musical ear) listen to the music while adjusting the metronome to the overall tempo of the music as it plays. Then assign the appropriate numerical value to the song. From this, indicate through the music scheduling system (manual or computer) the tempo rules and regulations desired for the sound of the station. The table listed is a recommendation for most music. Develop more gradations in the scale if station music policy needs tighter definition.

There are no opinions expressed, only the actual numerical value of the music tempo as determined by the metronome. There is absolute consistency in determining music tempo by this method.

While we're on the subject of music tempos, a word of caution. Frequently, there is some concern about the tempo of song "Intros" versus the overall tempo of the whole song.

For instance, a song may be a 4 on the music scale, but the intro is about a 2 for the first 12-15 seconds or so. For purposes of good sounding segues, some programmers like to indicate both tempos, like 2/4 (shows opening tempo as 2 then overall tempo is 4).

Be careful! Since most songs run 3:00-4:00 minutes in length (at least) you should be more concerned for the overall music "feel" of the station rather than the few seconds at the beginning or end. So don't get too caught up in having ideally matching segue tempos, if it is at the expense of the total hour by hour sound of the format. As an air staff becomes familiar with the music, the segues will take care of themselves.

In developing the overall tempo rules for the station, here's a good way to see the total hour by "averaging" the tempos into a numerical scale.

1. Add the tempo numbers (1-5 each) of all the songs in an hour.
2. This gives a total for the hour.
3. Divide by the number of selections scheduled.
4. This gives the "average" for the hour.
5. For example, in a 6 song AM Drive hour:

Song #1	Tempo 3
Song #2	Tempo 5
Song #3	Tempo 4
Song #4	Tempo 2
Song #5	Tempo 3
Song #6	<u>Tempo 4</u>

Tempo total 21 Divided by 6 songs = 3.5 Average hourly tempo

5. Assign a minimum hourly average for each hour or daypart, in this case, for AM Drive we might have a rule requiring a 3.8 hourly tempo average to keep things brighter, in which case we would substitute for song(s) #1,#4,#5 for songs with higher tempo values to get the hourly average up to the 3.8 rule.
6. Let the hourly tempo average rules reflect the changes in the mood of the station throughout the day, probably permitting a lower average tempo during middays and at nights, but higher in drive times.
7. Most computer music scheduling systems offer this feature as a built-in, rule setting opportunity. It's important to use it as an important part of designing the music scheduling requirements for the station.
8. If you have a manual system, just do the math.

Chapter 20: Dayparts and Dayparting

Radio listeners have different listening patterns. People listen to the radio at different times for different reasons. They may want more information in the morning to help plan their day. Weather, time, information about the day's community events, or News from overnight. Morning radio has always had and always will have the highest listenership of the industry. With few exceptions, most stations also have their greatest listenership in the early part of the day. In the morning, a large percentage of the population feels the need to be caught-up on what they might have missed while they slept. From the time the late evening TV news goes off, until waking the next morning, most people are in a news and information black-out. Therefore, there is an imagined (if not actual) urgency or at least curiosity about how the world fared while they slept.

Imagine a radio station being like a restaurant. Each time-segment of the day has specific items available on a menu that is designed to meet the customer's demands, whether for breakfast, lunch, or dinner. Continuing with the radio/restaurant analogy, one can expect more than just breakfast, lunch, and dinner specials. There is also a substantial offering of selections available that is interspersed throughout the menu, which offer some basic, dependable, always-in-demand items that are available around the clock.

Radio stations do the same thing by what we call "dayparting." Based upon researched or estimated listener levels, the broadcast day is divided into segments, which are called dayparts. A slightly different menu is served during each of them. Even though the menu changes through the dayparts, it still delivers some basic, consistent elements on which the audience has come to depend and by which the station becomes identified or defined.

Most stations are defined by their formats, most often music. Therefore a station's music is generally its defining element. A station may infuse more information in the morning and less later in the day, but it always plays the songs that identify and sustain the format image. It just plays them in different amounts at different times.

In other situations, the station may wish to designate certain songs to be played only at specific times of the day or night, because the audience targeted by those songs is available in greater numbers at night or on weekends. In these stations, a station may sound substantially different from one daypart to another.

This type of programming takes advantage of assembling parts of several different available listening audiences. If not done carefully and the dayparts are too different, a station runs the risk of alienating its audience and sending them to a competitor.

Here again, it is necessary to retain some identifying elements throughout the station's menu, even though the music and information balance may change throughout the day. How a station decides to daypart itself is largely determined the needs of the marketplace. Often, those needs are dependent on the number of stations that serve the market. The fewer stations for the listeners to select from, the safer it becomes to include more diverse programming elements throughout the day. The more stations, the greater the need to pick a single objective, narrow the format to include only elements which identify the station's image, and avoid including too many outside diversions. In either case, the programming complexion of a station falls into some typically similar patterns, as shown on the next page.

Let's take a look at a few other examples of dayparting. From the examples listed below, write the call letters of one or two stations in any market that follow the patterns described. By the time you get to the bottom of the page, you will most likely have listed all the major stations in that market:

- _____ * Strong morning personality with few songs early then music intensive the rest of the day
- _____ * Music format all day, talk middays and nights
- _____ * Music or talk shows with regular long-form sports or play-by-play
- _____ * Regular programming weekdays with special weekend programming including countdowns, religious or public affairs, interviews, retrospectives, etc.
- _____ * Information intensive morning show with talk and interviews thereafter
- _____ * Music balance varies widely depending on daypart, but personalities all sound similar
- _____ * Consistent music balance all day and night with widely different personalities for each daypart
- _____ * Ethnic programming. Music mixed with special shows
- _____ * Full service station seems to tie together music, interviews, public affairs with no loss of identity

The opportunities and variables in dayparting are limitless, but the important thing is to be sure the dayparted programming accomplishes the goals for which it is designed. All ratings services throughout the history of radio have to some degree encouraged stations to explore dayparting by publishing their ratings reports using dayparts as part of the ratings analysis. Although ratings services suggest specific hours to be designated as "standard" dayparts, there is an increasing tendency toward more "custom" dayparts. Be sure that the dayparts you establish for your station are based upon the true listening habits of your listeners and really reflect some parallel between your station and the market, overall.

For example, here's how Arbitron and most historical ratings services have divided the regular weekday into dayparts:

6am--10am	Monday-Friday	Morning Drive
10am-3pm	Monday-Friday	Middays
3pm-7pm	Monday-Friday	Afternoon Drive
7pm-12M	Monday-Friday	Evenings
12M-6am	Monday-Friday	Overnight

Rather than look at these as just periods of time, let's consider them as performances, like a movie schedule. Let's also then consider that each of these performances will appeal to a different audience, since different people are available to attend at different times of the day, as it suits them.

Research tells us that the 6am performance will have the largest audience in the theatre, so let's give them the works. By 10am the morning audience has left, so let's do a slightly different show for the midday crowd, and so it goes. Opening and closing the doors several times a day permits the entry of new audiences for each daypart.

To not confuse the audience, especially the listeners with ratings diaries, it is generally thought that we should not change the cast in mid-show. This sort of thinking is the primary reason for assigning or hiring announcers to work shifts that coincide with ratings company dayparts. But as mentioned, computer technology now permits custom design of any daypart configuration; whether it follows the ratings service dayparts or not. But Arbitron still retained the basic five-daypart daily format for their printed quarterly report book.

For stations not blessed with the computer information, the ratings companies' defined dayparts are gospel. This is also the way advertising agencies and buyers of radio advertising time have come to define a radio station's success or lack of it. The rationale for the use of pre-defined dayparts is that these daypart breaks appear to be the ideal times to change announcer shifts or phase-in dayparted programming elements.

Having programming follow pre-defined dayparts suggests that success or failure can be isolated and identified with whatever (or whoever) is on the air within that specific daypart.

Problem: The pre-defined daypart policy runs into trouble when it fails to take into consideration the times of day the LISTENERS actually tune in and out of the radio station. If the morning audience is already out of their cars and at work by 8:45am, what's the purpose in continuing the morning personality and the information until 10? Similarly, drive time in the afternoon in many cities is over by 6pm, yet the PM Drive personality hangs in there until 7pm.

In such circumstances, the ratings for a 3-7pm shift may be compromised because the audience drops off drastically at 6pm, averaging 3 strong hours with one very weak hour. By the same token, in an early rising "shift-work" type community, many listeners are up and going by 5am or earlier. A 6am to 10am morning shift might only truly represent a portion of the morning audience but 5:30-9am may more accurately represent you. **There may be significant advantages to developing the station's daypart structure on ratings presentations and a sales strategy that is defined by listeners' actual habits.**

Conversely, there is an argument that scheduling announcers across pre-defined dayparts can help to even out the difference between stronger and weaker air talent. For example, keeping that Morning man on past the morning audience because the Midday talent is weaker. Radio talent are rarely chameleons (despite their claims) and many personalities do not effectively change with a different shift. Some are more flexible than others, but a station should always tailor-fit each daypart with the right person. This becomes something to consider when promoting from within the staff.

We can all certainly appreciate company loyalty and rewarding someone for a job well done, but **never lose sight of the ultimate goal of the radio station, that is, to be a successful BUSINESS.** A winning Program Director may be the most popular guy at the radio station, but it's not a job requirement.

A person working overnight in a factory may seek to get a day shift and via seniority and merit get such a shift when one opens up. But is this a practical way to reassign radio air talent? Despite all the things that can be said for boosting station morale, etc., the winning programmers say no. However unpopular this might make them internally, they usually get better results by seeking a specially qualified person for the shift rather than upgrading someone who is less qualified, because he is already on staff. In baseball, you wouldn't give a shortstop the open position at catcher because he wants a better view of the game.

If someone on staff really is qualified to move up, then the programmer should recognize this and make the staff upgrade. **The harsh reality is that no one survives if the station is a failure.** The necessity of putting the human element aside for programming and daypart needs is often a difficult but critical element in successful programming.

Make sure that you do your homework and study the actual times and quantities of audience flow. Position the station to the advertising community this way as well, and generate support through sales presentations. There will always be advertisers or buyers who will routinely base station value/worth on the pre-defined daypart averages. There's nothing you can do about this, since the numbers are the numbers. But you can develop and promote a significant position that the station represents in the market by providing information about the station's real dayparts. It may indicate the ability to maximize an advertiser's dollars. Go ahead. Raise some doubt in the mind of an advertiser about whether they are buying efficiently when they select a competing radio station using pre-defined dayparts.

Chapter 21: Time Targets

One of the pivotal characteristics of all radio is its perpetual association with time. Being a 24 hour a day industry, radio stations are like giant clocks that mark off the seconds, minutes, and hours of the day. It's the only industry that comes to mind that actually establishes procedures and mechanics for telling time. You don't walk through an insurance company, book shop, restaurant, or department store and hear an employee announcing the time of day every 3 minutes. The very essence of Programming revolves around correctly timed hours of music...hour after hour after hour. To accommodate the need for correct timing, radio also places restrictions on other programming elements within those hours to specific time limits, i.e. commercial breaks, newscasts, weather, phone calls, etc.

An important and valuable number in ratings surveys is the TSL or Time Spent Listening. TSL measurements relate how many hours and minutes of each day listeners spend with each station. The TSL can also be broken down into each individual daypart. Because time is of the essence in all radio, it's important to understand how radio programmers can make time work to the station's advantage and when it can prove harmful.

In the chapter on Arbitron, we touched on the subject of "Time-Targets" and how they can affect listening. A "Time-Target" is just what its name implies, a target for accomplishing something on the air in the time allowed. Time targets make up an important part of our daily life, whether or not we know it.

We all have them, like:

Having to be at work at 8:30am is a time target, as is
Meeting someone for lunch at 12:15,
Picking up the dry cleaning at 4:00,
Simmering the spaghetti sauce for 90 minutes, and
Getting to the theatre for the 8:00 performance.

We leapfrog our life schedules going from one time target to the next and then on to the next. Problems arise when time targets conflict or coincide. On the air at radio stations, time targets work in somewhat the same way. Of course, there is a more direct purpose and it does not necessarily follow a 24 hour rhythm, as life does. A housefly lives four days, some trees live four centuries...a radio show lives about four hours. Each accomplishes certain things while getting from "start" to "finish". At the radio station, to really know listening patterns throughout the day, can be a valuable tool in developing time targets that will work for you. Radio survives and sells itself through on-the-air promotion of itself and its programming elements.

Ever heard these before?

- * "Another chance to win coming up next hour"
- * "It's Bob and Company again in the morning at 6"
- * "Paul Harvey News at Noon today"
- * "I have a toll free number for tax tips right after this"
- * "Tonight at 7:30 it's the Mets and the Cardinals".
- * "Something new from Michael Jackson after Captain Katie takes a look at traffic"
- * "Major fire may disrupt your phone service, details in 10 minutes on KTUR News"

We've all heard them. But few programmers really know how to use time targets
The secret of ~~effectively~~ using time targets is to make them realistic and specific. Make them correspond to how long you really believe a listener will wait for what you promise. Imagine just how long YOU would wait for the same thing.

Here's some unrealistic "Time-Targets", why they are no good, and how to improve them:

Example #1: Music is one of the most promotable items on a radio station (or it should be if the station positions itself as a music leader).

Announcer: **"Next hour, something from the "Sinatra: Live at the Sands album"**

What's wrong: No specific target. No matter how big a Sinatra fan I am, I gotta get to work. Next hour I'm gone. Imagine some circling the parking lot waiting for this tune.

Fix It: "At exactly 9:15 this morning, I've got a classic from the Sinatra at the Sands recording session. Plan to be near a radio at work and turn it up."

Example #2: Contests, by their very purpose, are designed to augment radio listenership. Few radio stations give away prizes to be nice guys. There should be a design and a purpose to each contest promotion. It's amazing how many stations give away thousands of dollars in contest prizes but fail to attain the goal of increased audience.

Announcer: **"More chances to win throughout the day here on Turtle-98"**

What's wrong: Even though listeners may need the money desperately, the motivation simply isn't there to sit by the radio all day.

Fix It: "Next time to win on Turtle-98 will be between 2:00 and 2:30 this afternoon, so if you have to be away from the radio for a while, go ahead...but be back in time to win."

This really makes them think they have a shot at winning.

Example #3: Next to the music and contests, the artists who comprise the format are very promotable, if done correctly.

Announcer: **"It's 3:10 in the afternoon at Turtle-98, later this hour. I'll have Madonna, Celene Dion, Sting, and Suzy Sweet"**

What's Wrong: Too general. Also promotes an unknown Suzy who?

Fix It: "It's 3:10...The best song the Madonna ever had, Sting and Celene Dion's top selling song of all time between now and 3:30 on Turtle-98."

Note: Only promote heavy hitters and make it a short wait. Give the station a feeling of only playing bombastic music by constantly reinforcing it with reminders...and play it!

Example #4: The station's own personalities can benefit from time target promoting. A little preparation helps.

Announcer: "**Listen later this afternoon for Steve Warren here on Turtle-98.**"

What's wrong: Too general. No motivation to listen what's the benefit to the listener?

Fix It: "This afternoon between 4:15 and 4:30 Steve Warren will tell you the truth behind the Little Bo Peep legend in another chapter of his Mother Goose uncovered series."

Note: Know what the personalities are famous for and what their daily features and bits are. Reinforce them throughout other dayparts...but be specific. Rotate several regular items that give an overall picture of the other air talent. If the listeners cannot listen to the other personalities, give them an idea of what they are missing.

We cannot close out the topic of time targets without a discussion of commercial copy. The actual copy as well as the presentation format of that copy must be treated with the utmost respect. That's what pays the bills. We'll also see how critical the awareness of timing is to commercial ads.

Although some new technology allows for commercial copy to be shown to the announcer on a computer monitor, most stations still rely on some form of simple paper copy. Some stations have gone to great lengths to reproduce vast numbers of the same commercial so that each hour of the day has all the copy necessary hour by hour, without having to flip back and forth in an alphabetical file book. Aside from being wasteful of paper, the sheer volume of paper can be cumbersome. I still suggest a simple alphabetical ring-binder type of copy book with durable (plastic) alphabetical tabs that won't wear out with heavy use. A small clamp to mark upcoming copy will suffice for turning quickly to the next piece of copy required. I've even seen a station very effectively use a clamp-type laundry clothespin for this purpose. Copy books should be a bit lower than eye-height, angled to avoid glare from overhead lighting. Adequate space should be allotted to the commercial copy book when designing the announcer environment. It should NOT be required to be put away and taken out when needed. A commercial copy book is a permanent part of the radio studio, as important as the microphone and other technical equipment. Reading is still the primary task of an announcer and commercial copy is the most important reading an announcer will ever do. All commercial copy should be only an arm's length away from the announcer at all times. Commercial copy should NEVER be kept in a file drawer or hanging file and require a separate function to access the copy and re-file it. This is no more than an interruption of the announcer's thought process, and is mere busy-work that interferes with the quality of the announcer's performance.

On recorded commercials, careful attention should be given to exactly what a commercial says, particularly dated material. Nothing destroys the credibility of a station's commercial integrity than running out-of-date commercial copy. All written copy should have clear end dates indicated. The same is true for commercial tape cartridges or any other media used for commercials. Another problem with some commercial copywriters is their desire to make one piece of copy suffice for a multi-dated event. For example:

"Everyone is invited this weekend to the big tent sale at Angus Al's Cattle Auction, on Friday Angus Al will kick off the event with a fireworks display at 9pm, then all day Saturday, there will be pony rides for the kids, free hot dogs and balloons, and a trick riding demonstration at 6pm. Then Sunday, it'll be live Country music from 2pm to 5pm with Ronny and the Ragweeds and a big finale Chili supper at 6. That's all the fun you'll have this weekend at Angus Al's Cattle Auction on County Road 23, just past where the old church used to be."

This might be an exciting piece of copy to run all week in advance of the event, but how many stations would actually run it through the conclusion of the event? Many! Obviously as each day passes during the event, there is mention of things which are over, thereby wasting the advertiser's ad time. By Saturday, Friday's events have ended. By Sunday, Saturday's fun is history. I suspect we all hear this kind of wasteful and ineffective advertising all the time. As Programmers, we must direct the advertising related departments within the station with respect to mandatory policies that control when putting anything on the air. Three or four variations of the copy above would have been sufficient to correct the problem. Incidentally, advertising agencies are sometimes equally guilty of producing this kind of copy, so make sure your station policies are not compromised. Remember, the listeners hold the radio station responsible for everything they hear, so regardless of where the errors originate, it's your job to correct them before they affect your listeners.

Chapter 22: Liner Cards

One of the facts of life in any radio studio is "thought starters" or Liner Cards. With all that goes on in and around the station, it's always convenient to have a set of reminder cards for event or activities. Use 4 X 6 inch cards rather than 3 X 5 so each card can contain more information and larger typeface for easier reading. Select the lightest tint of 4 colors of unlined cards including yellow, blue, salmon(orange) and white. Invest in several hundred of each color, especially white, since you will constantly be updating, changing, and replacing them. This simple, efficient system will help the air staff stay organized and the station sound consistent.

Ratings services, particularly Arbitron, require regular usage of slogans for identifying purposes. Most of the items on these "C" Promo cards will be automatic. But sometimes, even the best professionals overlook the obvious. In this case, these items are really reminders of key programming slogans. It's easy to get lazy and forget the basics, especially because they are so repetitive, but radio works by repetition and mandates their regular and frequent usage.

Here are the definitions of the four card-types:

1. Orange..."A" PROMOS

The hottest top promotions or next main event including:

- a. current contest
- b. concert or station co-promote event
- c. tease special event or start of something "coming" to the station
- d. new air staff member, program, contest, feature
- e. make these your NEXT event only
- f. lifespan on each card should only be a few days
- g. replace often for variety
- h. Usually only ONE but never more than 2 different items to promote at a time and never more than two cards (different copy) for each
- i. read one per hour in the first commercial break and paraphrase a repeated version at some other time 20-40 minutes later in the hour

Using the warm color orange is a reminder that these few cards represent the biggest thing happening at the station. This is top priority. It's HOT! It's the next main event the audience can anticipate or participate in. This is front page stuff!

2. Yellow..."B" PROMOS

Secondary promotions, programming, and cross-plugs:

- a. a card for every announcer shift (On the card put the actual airshift hours of each announcer, but when plugging, refer generally to daypart, i.e. Steve Warren, mornings; Jim Shew, early evenings; Al Knight, all night, etc.)
- b. incidental contests and games (Jim Shew has more circus tickets to win on tonight's trivia contest)
- c. weekend or special program promotion (i.e. countdowns, artist specials, holiday features)
- d. commercial or sales promotional announcements, remote appearances (You'll have a logged schedule of commercial remote plugs, but programming can run some too, playing UP the programming benefits of the event and playing DOWN the commercial mention. Save that for the paid spots.)
- e. news, public affairs, and informational promos including weather, traffic, sports, etc.
- f. this category may contain as many as 10-15 items
- g. read one hourly during the second commercial break

3. Blue..."C" PROMOS

Station slogans, positioning liners:

- a. Call Letters and dial position reminders
- b. Arbitron slogan file liners
- c. station catch phrases
- d. technical phrases (most powerful, AM Stereo, etc.)
- e. music or information positioning
- f. community positioning (oldest, first, involved, recognized, etc.)
- g. read one hourly as a drop-in, no fixed position

Since these items are phrases rather than promos, they should be used at the rate of at least one per hour as drop-ins anywhere convenient in the flow of programming. Make them a part of regular conversation rather than as stand alone remarks. For best response, select 6-8 different phrases, one per card. Double-up (2 cards) on a key phrase so it comes up more often.

Now that you have the cards typed and sorted with phrases, promos, contests, etc. selected, here's the operation of the card file system:

1. Build a special clear plastic box to hold the liner cards, so the announcer on duty can see through the plastic and know what's coming up next. Any plastic or plexiglass fabricator can build one for you for about \$50.00 or you can order one directly from MOR Media (see order form in back of this book).

Mount it at eye level so it's never out of sight. Off-to-the-side file boxes or copy books are too cumbersome and don't serve as constant reminders to the announcer about the station's positioning and activities.

2. Place the cards in the box compartments from left to right: A-B-C-PSA... Orange-Yellow-Blue-White.

3. After you have explained the format, contest, promotion, or whatever to the air staff personally and in writing. Ask them to help write some liner card promos themselves for variety. This lets the air staff take part in the promotion and also frequently unearths some misunderstandings regarding the instructions or the concepts.

Special Note: Promos can either be scheduled by the traffic department on the program log or they can be a part of the hourly format as indicated on the Format Clock. In the latter case, a tracking system is necessary to avoid repetition and ensure maximum exposure. We suggest a small rubber stamp of blank boxes to be stamped on each card, so the times can be recorded. This rubber stamp is particularly important in tracking PSA's, so there are more details and an example in our chapter on Public Service Announcements.

HERE ARE THE FOUR BASIC LINER CARD GROUPS:

"A" ORANGE PROMOTIONAL liners:

Define, describe, reinforce the stations "Hot" promotion. The primary and singular promotional thrust you want listeners to keep top of mind.

"Your \$100 a day radio station"

"Your Jagger, Jackson, Sinatra World Tour ticket station"

"B" YELLOW PLUG liners:

Sell yourself! Cross promote all other programming elements from weekend special programming to announcer shifts.

"Big Al takes your requests tonight starting at 8"

"Another Seventies Sunday Morning this weekend at Turtle 98"

"Bob and Company with special guest, Bart Simpson, again tomorrow morning at 6"

"C" BLUE IMAGE liners:

ARB slogan file liners or Slogans and station image material

"The home of eleven-in a row"

"Your Station to Dance to, Turtle 98",

"The great 98"

"D" WHITE PSA...Public Involvement (formerly Public Service):

Civic and community announcements emphasizing station involvement.

"Diabetes screening this weekend at the Small Mall Health Fair only \$5.00 ...free if you mention Turtle 98"

"Tonight at 7:30 the Turtle Truck will be in the High School parking lot collecting canned goods for FoodShare"

Chapter 23: Meetings

Radio is, for all practical purposes, a medium of communication, but as a business, we are often guilty of not communicating effectively enough internally to run the business properly. It never ceases to amaze me how we can carry a message across town or half way across a state from our announcers to our listeners, but have difficulty getting a message correctly interpreted from one office to another within our own four walls. Meetings are a necessary evil; especially in a business that runs twenty-four hours a day, as most radio stations do. It is imperative that the air-staff and, in fact, all programming persons assemble on a regular basis to coordinate the many activities of the radio station that are common to each of them and which depend upon each of them in order to succeed. This is why scheduling regular staff meetings at radio stations is a very important function, and one that can be made into an even more positive experience for all concerned.

My favorite staff meetings have combined some degree of pleasure along with exchanging radio station information. In New York City at WHN, I can remember Program Director Ruth Meyer's secretary calling each member of the air-staff the morning of each announcer meeting to remind us that there was a meeting that day at noon and to take our order for lunch. Then, when we all arrived in the conference room at noon, our individual delicatessen lunches were waiting for us at our assigned places. As we ate, tensions were broken and the stiffness of not having seen one another for a week or two was banished. Now we could get down to the business of listening to music and exchanging ideas about station business. In some major markets, announcer union regulations place restrictions on how frequently management can call staff members in for meetings without paying additional compensation; but in other instances, regular meetings are a built-in part of the announcer contract. In either case, it does not detract from the need for internal communication.

Radio station meetings should follow these rules:

1. Meetings should be scheduled at the same hour every time. That is to say: every Tuesday at one o'clock or every payday at two p.m. (Payday is an excellent time to have a meeting because stations staff members usually come to the station to pick up their checks that day anyway).
2. Meetings should be of fixed length. Thirty minutes to forty-five minutes should be ample time to discuss most radio station business.
3. Meetings must start on time. The best way to get meetings to start on time and to have people show up to attend them on time is to start them on time yourself whether everybody is there or not. You will notice the attendance level will pick up and the meetings will start on time with fewer absences thereafter once you have established your intention to start on time regardless of a few missing staff members. You cannot let the least disciplined person on your staff dictate the use of the valuable time of other staff members and the Program Director.
4. A meeting should have fixed agenda. It should not be a "let's all get together and talk about anything that comes up" session. Write five or six major topics on a prepared sheet and distribute it to all persons attending the meeting so they may review the topics for discussion, have a chance to think about them, and be able to respond during the meeting.
5. In planning the meeting, make sure the agenda includes only those items which are intended for the whole staff. Don't waste some staff members time on particular items that deal only with a few specific individuals. Smaller meetings in your office or even one-on-one get-togethers can accomplish this better than using the time of the whole staff.
6. Stick to the point. The person running the meeting should avoid the temptation to allow staff members to ramble on about subjects unrelated to the topics at hand.
7. Meetings can be fun, but they often turn into cleverness contests between staff members to see who can get the most laughs. Once you establish that the meeting is a business function and not a game of verbal one-upmanship, you can get more accomplished for the business needs of the station.
8. At the end of the meeting, the person supervising the meeting needs to summarize what has been discussed.
9. It is absolutely imperative that someone other than the person running the meeting keep an accurate set of minutes.

10. It is equally imperative that a brief outline of the meeting taken from the actual minutes (not the minutes themselves), be distributed to the staff members no later than one day after the meeting has taken place to reinforce what was discussed and what the intentions were in having a meeting in the first place.
11. Since radio air staff members are always dealing with time in their studio work, it can sometimes be beneficial to devise a clock face similar to the in-studio "hot clock" with the meeting elements placed on it. An example of a meeting "HOT CLOCK" can be found at the end of this chapter.

Going by these guidelines, meeting participants can see that there are in fact deadlines at getting things accomplished at the meetings just as there are on the air. Believe it or not, this does help move a meeting along.

Not all radio station meetings need to be formal conference room type get togethers. I have found that social gatherings are excellent ways to exchange ideas in a less formal setting. Save the actual business and station discipline and format-related meetings for the radio station, but brain storming sessions and get togethers for the exchange of artistic and creative ideas are best done away from the radio station. For this purpose, I have often used my home as a meeting place where I can provide a relaxed atmosphere, food, beverages, and where there are few time constraints. It's also nice, occasionally, to meet at another location, away from the radio station, such as a restaurant, where the station may trade for the cost of a lunch or a dinner or refreshments and an informal dinner party/meeting can take place.

Even at informal meetings, it's still necessary to have an agenda highlighting specific topics to be discussed; but in the less formal setting, you may permit greater latitude in rambling away from the central subject.

Sometimes there is an inclination to invite too many people to a meeting. I have found myself guilty of inviting the Promotion Director, the News Director, members of the news department, members of the sales department, or members of any other department who would like to be a part of the meeting all in the interest in establishing team work and camaraderie at the radio station. I do find, however, that this inter-departmental meeting scenario tends to become more a contest of each department advocating for its own special interests, with very little getting accomplished. I suggest that, perhaps once a month, a general staff meeting be held which does include members of other departments. This meeting may be handled by the general manager of the station and include individual presentations by the various department heads. In this case, the several departments can share general information and little participation by other attending staff members is required or encouraged other than to be informed and to pay attention to the items on the agenda.

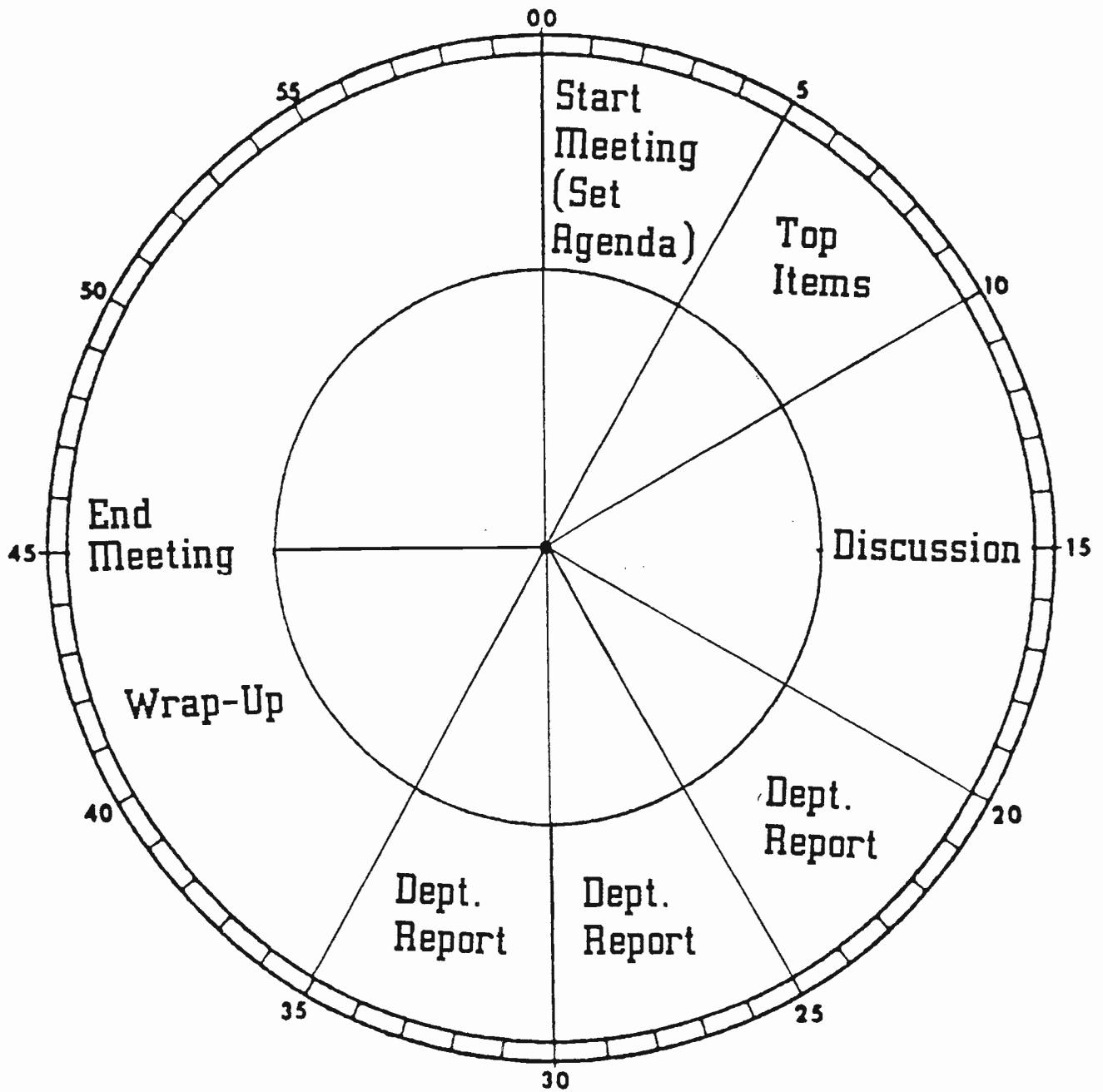
Although it's impossible to share all programming staff meeting information with the rest of the departments, it is not impossible to share the minutes of your meeting. Copies of the minutes of the meetings should also be directed to other department heads, including the Sales Manager and the General Manager. When writing minutes, highlight areas of particular interest to other departments on their copies. This also opens the door for programming to gain access to information being exchanged at meetings conducted by other departments.

One final note on scheduling. The best time to schedule a staff meeting is generally somewhere between 11am and 1pm. Obviously the overnight employees will have to get a short sleep period on those meeting days, but it ultimately is the best policy to have consistent meeting times. It especially helps to reinforce the regular meeting time, which cuts down on poor attendance. The person on the air needs to pre-record, if at all possible, that portion of the program in order to attend the meeting. Bring in a part-timer or board operator at their regular hourly wage to operate the station during the meeting.

Meetings in the 11am to 1pm time frame are the least taxing to most staff members and they inconvenience the fewest people. Because it occurs during regular office hours, often during lunch, there are fewer members of the station's business and sales staff present in the building. This often affords your department more comfortable access to the conference room and station facilities during meetings. Meetings held over the lunch hour also are less subject to interruptions. After all, there are fewer people in the building to need your time. Not only that, but the same holds for people outside the station who could claim your time. They are likely to be eating lunch then, too.

In preparation for outside-the-station promotions that require the attendance of a majority of the air-staff, have a small 10 to 15 minute business orientation meeting prior to the event at the location of the promotion. The purpose is to coordinate the operation of the event and to make clear any details or obstacles that may be encountered during the promotion. This short pre-promotional event meeting is an invaluable tool for making the function run smoothly and efficiently. It also demonstrates to the clients and non-station employees that you conduct yourself in a business-like manner and that you have established a routine. That makes them feel more comfortable about their association with the station, since you at least appear to be organized and, in most cases, probably are.

If you would like a more in-depth treatment of meetings and business organization in general, I recommend that you pick up a copy of R. Alec Mackenzie's The Time Trap (McGraw-Hill, 1972). It is a useful handbook for managing yourself and your affairs.



Chapter 24: Take a Break

Even though this is the twenty-fourth chapter, I actually wrote it last. I saved a spot right here for it in the middle of the book. As the weeks turned into months and the months into years, Chapter Twenty-Four remained "To Be Announced" on my table of contents. Finally, as I was within weeks of submitting the final version to the printer, there was the empty "Chapter Twenty-Four" staring me in the face. Before throwing in the towel by just re-numbering the other chapters and swallowing up "Chapter Twenty-Four," I decided it would be wise if I took a break and just thought about what to do. Then it happened!

While taking a break, I realized how important it is to: TAKE A BREAK! We are a business where workaholics abound. We create enormous workloads for ourselves and are so in touch with every aspect of our radio stations that we begin to feel that the station simply cannot function without us. We come in earlier each day. We stay later each evening or come back to the station at nights and on weekends. Ever taken an official day off only to find yourself stopping by the station just to check on things?

The timeliness and intensity of most station activities require an enormous degree of focus. That's good! But the downside is that, by definition, focus requires restricting one's attention toward a single point. This often occurs to the exclusion of everything else. For a better perspective, do yourself a favor and take a break. You'll actually be surprised at how much more creative you can be when you put something aside for just a little while, then get back to it with a slightly different frame of mind.

We all have individual ways of taking breaks. It's an acquired skill, however. There are many young Program Directors who really don't know how to relax. They're smothering themselves with office work which follows them to lunch and then home at night. The key to effective "break-taking" is delegation. It is not important that a Program Director consider his skills secrets. Occasionally the paranoia of thinking that others can do his job better, keeps many talented people closed-off from sharing things with the staffs. By failing to delegate (which can be interpreted as a failure to trust) an opposite impression can be developed at the radio station, that of being power hungry and possessive...which are definitely characteristics of candidates for eventual replacement.

Day-to-day operations can become boring and time consuming. One of the best characteristics of a good Program Director is creativity. Mundane chores rarely feed creativity. As long as the Program Director is accountable to the Station Manager, and the work gets done, few Managers really care who does the hands-on tasks. By passing along several of your key operations duties to others, three important things begin to happen.

1. They feel like they have a greater responsibility because you trust them.
2. You have more time available
3. You can move into a more creative state of mind

As for the paranoiacs, my theory is that good PDs win by staying AHEAD of the pack, not by keeping up with it. The sooner I can delegate a function to a deserving staff member, the sooner I can move farther ahead of the pack. As soon as I teach someone a new skill (for them), I can stay ahead of them by developing a new skill. Don't find yourself so caught up in being singularly possessive of every aspect of station activity that someone else on staff has the time to be more creative than you are.

Learn to delegate. As soon as you complete this chapter, give every member of your staff one of your secrets and make that duty part of their day-to-day job description. Then, take a good look at your own work schedule for the day, month and year ahead. Start thinking about all the time you'd like to reclaim in order to get your creative process going again. Remember, creativity does not just mean daydreaming. You can develop strategies or tactics. You can put yourself in another place physically and benefit from all you see and hear.

Most good Managers know the importance of taking breaks, so your Station Manager can be supportive of the practice. Notice how the Station Manager or other key Managerial personnel at the station take their breaks and follow their lead. Once you can delegate and once you can put a task aside and clear out your calendar, then take a break.

Here's list of some potential breaks. Are there some here you should already be taking to enhance your job performance?

1. Take every vacation day coming to you. Don't sell them back or forfeit them.
2. Holidays should be enjoyed away from the station.
3. Weekends away from the station. If air shift is required, then negotiate occasional alternating weekends off.
4. Lunch! Never grab a bite and eat at your desk! Get away from the station, take a full hour. Eat outdoors in fair weather.
5. Your home time is anything routinely outside of office hours.
6. Mid-morning or mid-afternoon, take a short walk outside the station.
7. Get coffee or soda down the street rather than in the staff lounge.
8. Close your office door, turn off the lights. Rest your eyes or lie on the floor.
9. Work occasional half-days during the week.
10. Go home and listen to air checks during office hours, rather than at the station.
11. Take a long lunch and do physical exercise (go to the health club, shoot some baskets, hit the driving range, etc.)
12. Celebrate employee birthdays at the station with cakes and candles and get everybody to take a break from their jobs for a few minutes.
13. Sit in the lobby for a few minutes. Chat with the receptionist or listeners who stop by.
14. Ask other employees to take a break with you to spend some time with them walking around the block or having a snack.
15. Go into an unused studio. Listen to a few favorite songs,(preferably not from your format) by yourself.
16. ...by now you should get the idea! So, stop reading for a few minutes and take a break.

Chapter 25: Vacation Policies

Most broadcasting companies establish vacation policies at the corporate level. Unfortunately, because of the peculiar 24 hour nature of the air staff, often vacation policies for other employees are difficult to apply. For station Managers, Owners, as well as Program Directors, I've devoted a few pages to the subject of vacations. Realizing full well that "company" policy sometimes seems inflexible, it is still important to reevaluate vacation policy in light of the peculiar nature of the radio business.

Here is a list of items to consider for establishing vacation policy:

1. Actually have two different policies in effect and in writing as part of company procedures. One for the air staff and another for other employees. This helps enormously in reconciling the diverse functions each performs and defining vacation procedures accordingly.
2. Since ratings services now operate all year, there really isn't any time "open" for vacations. So develop a creative schedule when air talent absences will be less noticed. Summer is still regarded as the best vacation time since less importance is usually placed on the Summer ratings for sales purposes.
3. At the beginning of each year, post a notice asking for proposed vacation requests. No obligation, just some proposed dates from each air staff member, utilizing all of the vacation time they have accrued.
4. Put these dates in pencil on a planning calendar. Watch for overlaps and notify those persons with conflicting dates.
5. Use seniority if you have to in breaking conflicts.
6. When hiring a new employee, especially a key player on the team, consider having his proposed and preferred vacation dates included contractually in his work agreement.

7. Suggest to employees that they take their vacation from midweek to midweek. This leaves them on the air for a portion of each week and lessens their absence rather than being away a whole week (bracketed by two weekends). This frequently can actually help the employee also by taking advantage of better air fares and hotel rates
8. Reconsider any policy of only taking whole weeks. Permit vacations to be taken in "days" rather than weeks. Most air talent seems to like more frequent, shorter breaks...three and four day weekends. The need to take a break from on the air performance is an ongoing need, not completely satisfied by two or three week-long vacations.
9. Vacation time is cherished by air staff members. But usually, so is their work and devotion to their performance. Since their absence from the station is more obvious than that of other staff positions, there seems to be an unwritten obligation for air talent to have generally good attendance records. Recognize this characteristic in the staff, but encourage them to take vacations for the mutual benefit of the station as well as the individual.
10. Use bonus vacation days as incentive or rewards for exceptional performance. For example:
 - a. ratings achievement
 - b. performing a particularly impressive civic function
 - c. working on a holiday
 - d. completing an assigned station project
 - e. as rewards for personal appearances (see chapter on Personal Appearance)

Chapter 26: Studio Manners

A radio studio is a small, cramped, claustrophobic, stuffy, ill-lighted, poorly-ventilated, under-decorated room from which much creativity and excellence is expected to evolve. It is occupied 24 hours every day, 7 days every week, all months, every year, forever. It's the plane that never lands. I'm pleased to see that more attention seems to be paid to studio decor and comfort than in previous years. Many broadcasting companies, especially the ones who have acquired multiple stations in a single market are moving into new studio/office operations. With many departments combining into smaller more efficient operations, the air studios for each station seem to have become less impersonal and more closely reflect the personality of the format and the staff that uses them. Glaring fluorescent lights seem to be giving way to area lighting, to be adjusted by the person on the air. Old style fiber soundproofing seems to be yielding to carpeted walls. If you are still working in a shabby, cluttered air studio, let me suggest that is it very likely affecting your performance and the performances of every other staff member. With a little effort, maybe some towels and cleaning supplies, a trip to the local home-center, and suggestions from all staff members, you just might make a big difference in the degree of performance your station exhibits and the attitude of each staff member.

In spite of the physical facility itself, there are a few rules for P.D.s and announcers to observe regarding the studio generally. Studios are much like automobiles. Everything is there, it's just in different places from one to another.

There's no particular priority here since most folks who work in radio studios have to play the cards as dealt. But review this list, anyway.

1. Sitting down is better than standing. The theory that our voices sound better while we stand is something someone invented after seeing pictures of old dramatic radio actors standing around microphones holding their scripts at arms length. With today's finely processed equipment and limited pick-up microphones, voices sound like voices, sitting or standing. The thing stand-up operations do enhance vocally is how tired and distracted an announcer can become in such a studio. Even in studios where an option exists to stand or sit, the sitting position should be comfortable. Standing or sitting uncomfortably for a long period of time can also increase fatigue on your back and certainly on your feet.
2. Sit down studios also lend more comfort to someone who is creative by having the studio equipment spread out over a larger area. Rather than being "at arms reach," as in a well-designed sit down studio, things are "only a few steps away" in a stand up operation.
3. The studio is not a social gathering spot. Meetings with other staff members, sales, news or whomever should not be done during an air shift in the studio. Listeners first!!!
4. Rule 3 also applies to other announcers before or after their shift. Get in the studio about 15 minutes before air time to get stuff together. Then be completely cleared out a few minutes after the shift.
5. Starting or ending a shift is a crucial time for either establishing or wrapping-up that day's relationship with the listeners. That is when distractions can do the most damage. The first few minutes a shift are usually a bit shaky, anyway. No one needs company in the studio to complicate matters.
6. Smoking. Don't! I know this sounds simple. I absolutely cannot justify how or why anyone who is seeking to use their voice professionally and who deals with other people on a daily basis, or shares a close working space can be a smoker. I am very pleased that most large radio groups in the United States operate in a non-smoking environment.
7. Phone calls. Again...listeners first. During an air shift is not the time to review domestic plans, argue with creditors, patch up relationships, etc. Talk to as many listeners as time allows, briefly. Listen to what they have to say but establish a policy of being brief. If a caller has something more in depth that's interesting, then have them call back when you're off the air.

8. Avoid clutter. A simple prominently placed bulletin board listing only current information in necessary.
9. Staff lists, technical or discrepancy forms, policy books, etc. can best be assigned to specific, out of the way locations.
10. Avoid using tape to stick things up for the announcer to read. Use metal clips. They're movable so each announcer can adjust them.
11. If there are studio windows to the lobby, hallway, other studio, etc., keep them clear of notes or taped-up messages. Keep windows clean so you can see clearly through them and so they can let in light. That's why they're windows.
12. The best time to paint or carpet a studio is simultaneous with a format change or the inception of a new policy or promotion.
13. An obvious physical change in the air studio serves as a constant reminder to the staff of something new and different about the station. In the case of a major format change, re-paint or re-decorate, even if it's not necessary. It enhances the new attitudes.
14. Keep personal items (cups, snacks, earphones, supplies) in a separate location, away from the studio. If there is an announcers' lounge area, locking file drawers are preferred. Even actual small half-lockers, like those a health club or spa, work very nicely.
15. Every radio studio in America has a roll of toilet tissue in it. Rather than have it sitting out, buy a regular bathroom type roll-dispenser and mount it conveniently.
16. Wooden cotton swabs for tape-head cleaning are good for cleaning ears. Similarly, single edge tape-editing razor blades do wonders for fingernail/cuticle annoyances...**ONLY KIDDING!!!** Be careful. Once in a while I need to see if you're paying attention!
17. Finally, and let's get serious here. Personal hygiene and good grooming manners are always appreciated. A spare deodorant and toothbrush in your desk drawer can come in very handy.

Chapter 27: Titles

It has often been said that one gets titles rather than raises. Obviously, you can't take a title to the bank, but in many cases, eventually you can. Titles, even though they don't put any money in the pocket at the moment, tend to be the sort of thing that looks good on a resume and plays well on the ears of the banks, stores, and the general public. If there are actual duties and responsibilities that accompany the title, the opportunity to learn another area of radio station operations can actually become a big advantage.

Over the years of handing-out (and receiving) titles in lieu of raises, there are a few titles that fit almost every radio station. In building the "team" concept at a station, it's really a good idea to distribute significant responsibility so every member of the staff has a stake in its success. Giving a staff member, especially someone on the air, a title also solves the problem of what to print on their business cards under their name. "Disc Jockey" never did it for me, although some stations have used terms like "Air-Personality" or "Announcer". These titles sound sort of silly to the general public or at a cocktail party where business cards with titles like "Consulting Engineer", "Attorney at Law", or "Osteopathic Physician" are being handed out.

A variety of creative titles which actually DO indicate responsibilities and duties assigned to the staff member may open doors for them and the station. It makes the staff member feel more significant and important in the eyes of the community they need to deal with in conducting station business.

When hiring staff positions, it's perfectly legal and desirable to recruit applicants for a titled position, which may bring forth a more talented, experienced, and in-depth individual for what might formerly have been an "air-shift" only position. So, here are a few of the titles and some of the job descriptions that go along with them.

Promotions Director If the station does not have a promotions department as such, this can be a perfect job title and responsibility for the member of the staff who is most likely to be assisting in the station's promotional operations. This title can also go to someone outgoing and aggressive toward promoting station events, generally.

Production Director Some stations double an announcer position as the Production Director, but someone needs to be assigned the responsibility for commercial production, the production studio, systems and standards. Even if all air-staff members share production responsibilities on a pick-up basis, it's still advisable to name one person to oversee the department (or to make in into a department).

Director of Special Programs I like this one. It's a title given to an announcer, usually the all night or evening person (often even a part-timer). This person is responsible for the incoming weekend and special programs that arrive at the station by mail, UPS, satellite, et al. Weekend countdowns, music specials, interviews, special event, public affairs, religious, ethnic, you name it. Let them handle the arrangements with the networks and syndicators who supply the programming. Let them check-in the discs, mail back the tapes, fill out the affidavits and the multitude of other minor matters requiring attention. This position is also very helpful around holiday time when there is an abundance of special programs available, all of which need to be organized. Director of Special Programs is a great title for someone and effective handling of the duties can clear up a lot of time for the P.D. to work on more profitable matters.

Music Director A title that in many cases fairly belongs on the shoulders of one of the air staff members who is most influential with adding and removing music from the playlist. This needs to be someone who can work with the music and the record companies in a fair and responsible manner. Depending upon the format, the size of the music library, or the management's music policy, a Music Director can (like the Production Director) be responsible for the operation of the station's music programming. This may also involve scheduling, computer entry, carting new songs, assembling weekly charts, or cataloging the storage library. At some stations where music programming is very competitive and intense, the Music Director may actually be a full time position and may exercise actual artistic control over station music selection.

Director of Special Projects A catch-all title that falls under the classification of "utility infielder." This person can be pressed into service in a number of areas, such as promotions, driving the station vehicle, setting up remotes, running errands, or any other responsibilities requiring them to deal with listeners and the business community. More than a delivery person or go-fer, the Director of Special Projects title adds importance to even the smallest jobs at the station because it binds them together in an ongoing effort toward station success.

Public Service Director Rarely is this a position which is a full time job at any radio station, but it is an excellent position and title to give to the member of the air staff selected to be a liaison with Public Service and community organizations. This person can be very helpful in working with the P.D. on Public Service promotions and contests as well as providing visibly by attending public relations and public affairs events. They represent the radio station on the front-line, interfacing directly with the community. This person can carry a tape recorder and microphone and also be an appendage to the News Department via their access to events and people in the community. This person enjoys exposure and doesn't mind a free lunch or ribbon-cutting ceremony once in a while. It require a full-time member of the air staff (or on the air at all) but is an excellent position for someone who likes the visibility and appearance of being a station "personality."

Occasionally, the Public Service Director title is given to a member of the News Staff. Since most stations already have a News Director and perhaps even an Assistant News Director, the third position in the newsroom can be the Public Service Director. The Newsroom is, by definition, already aware of what is going on in the community and receives press releases from various organizations. Thus, it is already equipped to handle interviews and news oriented items that deal with public affairs issues.

Whether or not to give titles to staff members is a personal and/or company choice. However, following are some of the job descriptions that need to be delegated to members of the air staff.

There are at least six significant areas of delegation which can be sub-divided, mixed, matched or combined:

Description #1 To coordinate, develop, and produce promos for remotes, special events, listener comments, and contest promotions.

Description #2 To collect, write, and file Public Service information and provide an events list for the staff. Keep a running calendar of Public Service and Public Affairs events that are scheduled and of which the station will have some participation.

Description #3 Audience research. A liaison with area media, theater, civic groups, and sports franchises. Locate and list events for participation in terms of opportunities for on-site audience research or to represent the station at potential research opportunity events.

Description #4 To produce the daily music list or schedule. Edit music computer, delete, update, add songs in music rotation. Fix discrepancies, run weekly/monthly music reports. Generally assist in all aspects of station music operations.

Description #5 Preferably an evening air staff member who can do audience research, coordinate contest winners and handle the operation of the contest. This is a good job for an evening person since most contests run during the daytime. The day's contest activities will have ended for the day and can be caught up by this person as well as preparation for the next day's activities.

Description #6 Weekend/special programming check-in. Make sure promos are recorded and in-studio for specials. Send in affidavits from syndicators. Keep records and schedules of upcoming programs. This person can also assist in adding/carting music and in training new employees.

Chapter 28: Station Resources

In another chapter, we talk about the importance of formal research, as presented by institutional research organizations. Turning away from the research company approach long enough to see what the station itself has to offer is sometimes a difficult task. It would not be uncommon for radio station management to completely overlook the talent and the ability and the capabilities available on its own payroll in order to accept information coming from an outside source or research company. It would be my hope that most modern radio operations have the good sense to positively exploit what is already theirs. Many radio stations have enormous, untapped resources at their finger tips.

Without involving a research company, it is not unusual for great radio stations to utilize their listeners to find needed music, for determining the types of promotions that best work effectively, by determining what type of programming is needed at certain times of the day and by providing the station some measure of its success in sales and promotional matters.

This is not a long chapter, but it states a valuable principle which is often overlooked. Radio stations, above and beyond all else, need to hire talented and skilled Programming Management people, equip them with the best tools possible and let them use the creativity of their own mind, imagination, and originality. Mistakes will be made, but great ideas come from good ideas which come from bad ideas which may have resulted in failure. This is how the process works. Give talented people the opportunity, even the opportunity to fail now and then, and they will create a product that is unlike any other in the market. Station ownership and management that repeatedly by-passes its own staff to import data and information from the outside is doing itself and its ownership a great disservice.

While it is sometimes very worthwhile to get a fresh view of the operation from an outside source, such an audit cannot and should not be considered a substitute for the inestimably valuable insights into a market that staff members possess by virtue of their daily participation in the process of the format. After all, it is the waiter and the bartender who are the restaurant, not the owner. It is the sales help or checkout clerk who is the store, not the shareholders. It is the front-line customer-interface people who hear all the suggestions, all the complaints and all the congratulatory comments.

Without even knowing it, the staff of a radio station comprise a market awareness that no outside consultant can match with structured, formal, time-restricted interviews or demographics. Unless REALLY drastic (read format change) measures are contemplated, it is simply a waste of talent to leave in-house staff out of discussions that relate to listeners and listeners' attitudes.

A Radio Station speaks with a big voice in the community it serves. It can attract resources to its doors that can in turn be utilized successfully unlike any other form of business. This is the business of communication, and communication is the exchange of ideas. How can a business built upon the exchange of ideas actually be successful if it fails to exchange ideas among its own staff?

Frequently, I hold "brainstorming" sessions with the staff of stations I either manage or consult. I start by setting up a list of topics, including proposed topics, promotions, and needs which may occur within several months. Each person at the session is given a sheet of paper with 10 blank lines and a blank topic heading space, which is filled-in at my direction. Then, we open the topic and have everyone write as many ideas as they can about the subject on the blank lines. First, I explain three basic rules of the session.

Rule #1 There are to be no negative ideas or discussions of why any idea "won't work".

Rule #2 We are just looking for ideas, therefore nothing about the ideas is actually discussed in detail, that comes later when the ideas have all be collected and arranged by project.

Rule #3 There are NO bad ideas, so write down every thought about a topic. Often what may appear to be a bad or poorly developed idea may yield a better idea which would not have occurred without the original "bad" idea.

Then, in the weeks following the "brainstorming" when the time exists to actually address each of the projects, you'll have a stack of ideas, contributed by the entire staff, from which to choose the direction and methods of execution of the plan.

Chapter 29: The Listeners

Every ratings service, research company, and individual radio station has endeavored to accurately identify the specific person they may call a "listener". When I teach a class about Radio Programming in the U.S. or in Europe (where commercial radio is still in the developmental stages in many countries), I always write in the corner of the chalkboard this phrase:

"IT'S ALL ABOUT THE LISTENERS"

At every opportunity whether the session includes discussions about technology, sales, programming, music, promotions, vocal style, management, or any other aspect of radio broadcasting, I can safely and confidently point to the chalkboard anywhere in the discussion to return the thought process to the indisputable fact that, "It's all about the listeners". Without the successful cultivation of some measurable and pro-active listenership, radio fails. This simple phrase drives every department of the radio station and is pivotal in any decisions we make as broadcasters. Sometimes, it makes good sense to remind our on-air talent that they are talking to real people.

No matter how much we may get caught up in our own participation in the radio industry and how much knowledge we acquire as day-to-day broadcasters, the listener remains the crucial individual in the success of any radio station. Without them there is no success, no revenue, no ratings, no jobs, no nothing. Regardless of station format, accurately identifying and serving listeners is paramount. While the characteristics of listeners vary from format to format and market to market, there are several general listener-qualities which are often overlooked. I am reminded that we often look too closely at some things to the exclusion of the bigger picture, like the man who gets eaten by the dog while looking for its fleas. Before becoming immersed in establishing some grand, in-depth definition of our listeners.

We like to feel important to the success of radio, but let's acknowledging a few truths:

1. Listeners don't care about radio as much as we do. We are inside the industry and surround ourselves with similar people. The rest of society's contact with radio is rarely personal, but rather, electronic and distant. How much of our day is devoted to thinking about our socks? A few minutes every morning and again every night? To someone who works at the sock factory, they think about socks all day. A whole life centered around the manufacture, marketing, and sale of socks. The reverse is probably true, they only think about radio a few minutes a day, while we think it's our whole world.
2. Listeners are slower to accept what we do on the air and slower to forget what we have done. Music, contests, promotions, announcer recognition all take 5-10 times longer than we usually allow. When we get tired of it, we think they get tired of it, too. Listeners often cling to impressions of our radio station created months (if not years) earlier.
3. Personal attention cannot be replaced. Answer all listener mail. Even something as simple as some pre-printed note cards bearing the station logo, can be welcome. Just a few lines of personal acknowledgement will probably set you apart from most other radio stations, who rarely answer listener mail.
4. The percentage of people who will write a letter DOES NOT represent the same opinion of those who do not. There is a myth that supposes a letter represents some phantom number of "other" persons with the same comment or opinion. There is no evidence of any correlated number and we often are misled by believing there is. Those who write may only be expressing an individual, specific opinion...not shared by anyone else. To over-react to this correspondence may be damaging.
5. Same as number 4, but refers to telephone callers. Obviously, be courteous on the phone. But understand that generally, phone callers want a favor, a song, a request, a dedication, or something(!) You might turn the call into a more valuable experience by asking more questions about their listening habits, why they like what they like, and describe their listening environment. In this case, they are doing a favor for you.
6. Listeners are a resource. They can be helpful in locating obscure music selections and can possibly provide "expert" commentary for News or public affairs material. Don't be afraid to invite listeners directly to provide information or services to the station.
7. At station-sponsored events, visit, sit, eat, drink with listeners, not other station staff. the more we can learn about their lives, families, jobs, and interests, the better we'll be able to visualize them realistically in designing our programming and in selecting what we say when we speak to them via the radio.

Chapter 30: Being an On-The-Air Program Director

Frequently in the interest of economy, It is necessary for the Program Director to also be a full-time member of the air staff. This practice is almost routine in smaller markets, but the work load and other station responsibilities at a larger facility may justify an off-the-air P.D. In either case, the job of programming the station must be accomplished. Largely it becomes a lesson in discipline and time management. Being on the air can help the P.D. identify with some of the problems faced by the other air staff members. He also can identify and correct problems with the operation of the formatics others are expected to follow.

With few exceptions, most Program Directors have risen through the ranks of being on the air in a variety of markets and formats. At some points in their careers they have observed and modeled their potential Program Director style after someone (or a composite of several people) with whom or for whom they have worked. Station management should be specific regarding the goals of the Program Director and how doing a regular air-shift can accomplish those goals. I've known some very good air talent that became ineffective Program Directors because they retained more of the "artist: than the "administrator". Conversely, I've worked with some terrific Program Directors who were pretty bad on the air. Somewhere, they hooked onto their ability to work more effectively behind the scenes than on the air. In between these two examples is probably where most on-air Program Directors find themselves. I actually suggest that the Program Director should be better than average on the air and be utilized in a more visible position than just doing one of those popular two-hour midday shifts. A very good friend of mine in New York radio, Dan Daniel (WMCA, WHN, WYNY, WCBS-FM), told me many years ago, "Never give up the Mike". I think the difference in being on-the-air and off-the-air cannot be overstated. To this day, regardless of my consulting, speaking, and management duties, I continue to be on-the-air (and pretty good at it) whenever possible.

Having said that, however, being on the air can give the P.D. a long list of ideas of things to do, but being on the air allows little time to do them.

Here is a check-list of possibilities for on the air Program Directors. Look over them and see if any apply to you or the Program Director with whom you work:

1. You have the advantage of complete empathy with the air staff since you are one of them. Use this to find the trouble spots and operational problems in the studio.
2. Take the opportunity to lead by example. Show 'em how it ought to be done, correctly!
3. Professionally, you can advance a career on two fronts simultaneously, on the air as well as programming management. Learn from each position.
4. (This is a toughie!) You must be able/willing to play by your own rules and follow the same directions you require of staff. Self-evaluate air work, share Programming rules and regulations (memos) with a trusted counterpart at another station somewhere. Find another P.D. (or consultant) whose opinion you trust. Let them review your performance on the air based upon the rules you have laid down and have supplied to them.
5. Listeners deserve total attention while you are on the air. Don't use studio time for staff meetings or personal business.
6. Reinforce the sanctity of the air studio by being firm in asking for no interruptions while you are on the air. Include Sales, secretarial, other announcers, etc.

SAMPLE MEMO:

"As you know, I am now on the air every afternoon from 3 pm to 6 pm. I would personally appreciate holding any Programming or business discussions for times other than those three hours when our listeners should get (and deserve) my full attention. There will occasionally be exceptions...please make them exceptional".

7. Ideally, the on the air P.D. must walk a fine line between representing the interests of the Programming staff and those of Management. For this reason, it is necessary to always keep the position in perspective. When push comes to shove, you represent management foremost, frequently requiring the creation of a comfort zone between you and other air staff members. Try to accomplish this without appearing aloof.
8. Re-examine personal relationships with other air staff members. Avoid social situations that appear to show favoritism.
9. Avoid developing an image of using the position for personal gain at the expense of others. That is, assigning remotes and talent opportunities to yourself, accepting station perks which could best be shared.

10. You are a conduit of information between Management and the Programming staff. Never be compromised by giving the appearance of being a "spy" ...for either side. Developing an even-handed attitude that allows you to manage "up" and manage "down" will be crucial in establishing yourself as a good Program Director.
11. Develop and maintain communication with all the other departments at the station. Establish the ground rules for dealing with each of them. Set up rules and options at having them work with you at mutually agreeable times. Make it imperative that handling non-emergency administrative duties should not be done while you are in the studio and on-the-air.
12. Document everything. Save copies of memos, budget requests, promotional ideas, personnel concerns, proposals, and meeting notes. The idea is not to build a paper trail for purposes of indicting someone, but to have a record of the many, many things requiring attention. Occasional review of prior notes can give you perspective on what has and hasn't been done toward programming goals.
13. Have occasional meetings away from the station. At home, a restaurant, a park or other non-station environment can be an excellent release from the confinement of the station. A more relaxed atmosphere is more conducive to creativity and conversational exchange.
14. Attend as many conferences and conventions as you can. Never pass up an opportunity to compare notes with other Program Directors. Similarly, communicate with other air-personalities regarding how they can best execute a superior on-air performance. Share these ideas with your on-air staff.
15. Develop a network of other Program Directors elsewhere in the region (or country) to share and exchange air checks and ideas with.

Chapter 31: Self-Liquidating Promotions

Self-liquidating promotions are promotions which pay for themselves by means of multiple participation of other businesses or interests within the promotion. If a promotion is devised which requires a prize, entry blanks, signs, newspaper ads, etc. A self-liquidating opportunity exists by the mutual participation of several parties other than the radio station.

For example: Approach a local newspaper and ask if they would like to be a sponsor of the promotion or the event along with the radio station. With their consent and participation, the radio station automatically has access to their readership and has also taken care of the newspaper advertising portion of the promotion.

Similarly, entry blanks, signs, or posters can be obtained by enlisting the services of a printer. In exchange, the printer gets acknowledgement on the radio station as a co-sponsor as well as having their logo or name appear with the station in promotional advertising. Should the station enlist the resources of a co-sponsor like a car dealer, restaurant, or retail store, let THEM print any necessary materials using their existing PRINT budget. Remember to provide them with the station logo and, by all means, retain the right of approval before going to press. As for prizes, they can be obtained from one of the co-sponsors (to reinforce his product line) or from other participating sponsors who provide supplemental prizes in exchange for promotional mentions on the radio station. It's not necessary for the items being given away to be promoted if they are not significant parts of the prize. Sometimes the provider wants to promote something else at a later date.

Other self-liquidating promotions involve station merchandise where the station has enough audience popularity to invest in its own promotional items (T-Shirts, Caps, Jackets, etc.) which are re-sold at commercial locations. The station can benefit enormously from these items, since people want to pay the station for free advertising. Promotional merchandise must be compatible with the station image, demographic, and format.

Distribute self-liquidating station merchandise items through the participation of a retailer, preferably a clothing store, where station merchandise can be sold as an exclusive item. A regular schedule of commercial announcements on the station proclaims the store as the exclusive outlet for station items, providing additional foot traffic to the merchant's location. In exchange, the commitment to display and sell station merchandise. This method of selling station items also provides easy sale procedures since most stores are set up to accept checks and credit cards, whereas the station itself may not be.

Occasionally, but not regularly, it might be possible for a participating co-sponsor to have some visibility on station merchandise items. I only recommend this in exceptional cases. Too many logos or conflicting promotional messages clutter a piece of apparel or other item. Work out the financial matters in advance and contractually agree on the price for each item, the "split" of the revenue, and the accounting and/or accountability.

Take advantage of the self-liquidating sale of merchandise through mail-order. Listeners write and request items, pay by check, and receive the item by return mail. Provide a small display case at the station for promotional items and sell them right there. If the station does this, be in compliance with state and local laws which may require collection of taxes, licensing, or permits.

Should the station wish to set up a small retail operation, the opportunity for additional revenue is considerable, just keep the operation under control and on the books. Avoid potential problems by not selling items via a cigar box full of cash at the receptionist's desk. Selling merchandise directly eliminates the middle man and can indeed become another revenue center for the station.

For another approach, a portion of the profits of the sale of each item can go to a designated charity, adding a positive dimension to the popularity of the items and enhancing the community image of the station.

In setting up promotions, it's crucial to draw up a game plan of exactly what you want the promotion to accomplish. Then, run through a list of potential participants. Approach the participants individually to assess their willingness to become involved. Set up a list of potential participants based upon the function they are to perform within the promotion. If food is required, then look for five or six food sources (restaurants, supermarkets, caterers). If the promotion requires equipment or supplies, establish a list of businesses who specialize in those items. If the station feels the promotion can be significantly enhanced by additional promotion from outside media, then establish a list of potential alternative media participants, such as cable, newspaper, weekly publications, TV, or outdoor (billboards). If you need a location then shop around for that, too.

Having broken the event down into its various potential participants and elements, direct different station personnel with their varying degrees of experience and influence to approach the other potential participants with the opportunity to join forces with the station on this event. Our chapter on Public Service also suggest some opportunities to tie-in with a charity or non-profit organization for mutual benefit. The chapter on Meetings sets up a structure for any type of productive meeting format.

Once the station has found a willing participant in each of the elements required for a successful promotion, get everyone together for a planning meeting, mapping out the goals and expectations for the promotion so each is clear about their contribution.

The initial organizational meeting is critical for establishing duties and accountability. At that initial meeting, outline specifically who is accountable for what and by when. Most importantly, establish the radio station generally (and one person, specifically) as the chairperson for the event. In most cases, this person would be the station Promotions Manager, but could also be the P.D. or often the PSA Director, in the event of a community involved promotion. It is important to establish a person in charge, station and participant accountability, and a clear operating framework for a successful promotion.

Make it understood from the beginning what is expected of each participant in dollars and cents, manpower and merchandise, as well as their obligation to promote the event and participate in its success. As payback, the station should be sensitive to what each participant wants in return from the station in exchange for their involvement.

Putting together promotions of this sort should become routine. An active, promotable radio station should seek to put together several promotions a year based upon this pattern. Promotion needs to be done regularly for a radio station to continue to project its identity effectively. As long as the system is in place for setting up and operating successful self-liquidating promotions, why dismantle it? Hopscotch right into the next promotion, often using the same participants, or others on the original lists. Often businesses not included in one promotion are eager to participate in the next because of its visibility and former involvement of a competitor. Those likely sponsors on the lists will, one hopes, have perceived something positive from the successful promotion and will not miss the opportunity to be involved next time.

Often, if a promotion is really successful, get the same sponsors participating on a regular basis. It's always great to sign up sponsors if you don't have any, but don't get painted into a corner and exclude other potential sponsors from future promotions. Don't lock someone out or they might take a previously pitched promotional idea to a competing radio station and launch a promotion. This could result in losing touch with that client and running the risk of a competing station have a more successful promotion.

One closing note on promotions:

Like everything else, it's always advisable to get everything in writing. (Remember, a verbal contract isn't worth the paper it's written on.) Outline and explain the details and responsibilities. Make sure all parties are copied on all correspondence. Since timing is everything in promotion, time-bind every expectation at every level of the event and each participant to a firm schedule of completion and reporting. Since many promotions are also considered "contests", specific rules and regulations containing all the necessary legal language required by your state and/or legal advisors should be established and available to the public for inspection

Chapter 32: How To Promote A Station (Without Money!)

I have yet to encounter a radio station that had enough money to accomplish a promotion it wanted to execute. It seems like promotion, to many station owners, is a bottomless pit which constantly sucks cash away from the bottom line with too frequently no evidence of having accomplished anything. Certainly money is very helpful when it comes to promoting a radio station, but let's take a look at a few ways a station can be promoted without using cash (or very little). If any funding does become available, it can be used to augment these techniques for even greater effectiveness.

1. One of the most overlooked ways to promote any radio station is by using the radio station itself. A successful radio station is always talking about itself. Several times each hour, radio personalities, around the clock, need to be reinforcing in the listeners minds all the promotable aspects of the radio station; whether they are programming features, outside promotions, contests, or services that the station performs. Sometimes station promotions unfortunately only take the position of promoting through outside-medium newspapers, billboards, or television spots; but neglect to use their own radio stations to promote themselves. Saturate with self-promotion.

Although radio works by repetition, too frequent repetition of station promotion material can become very tiring on the audience and produce listener fatigue. Therefore, station promotional announcements should be frequently updated, using new copy, different announcers, different production music, some fast, slow, short, long, in detail, brief, but never let up on the constant selling of the radio station. This costs nothing. Run promotional announcements during the day just like normal commercials. Stations usually have promo positions in their broadcast hour which are in addition to their commercial time. Most radio audiences don't understand the difference, or see any difference at all, between a promotional announcement and a commercial announcement. A station promo will be just another commercial to them. Rather than develop individual promo locations each hour, schedule station promos in unsold commercial slots that are available. Even if this means the occasional expense of bumping a commercial spot. This will happen from time-to-time (mostly in drive time), but the programming integrity of the music and entertainment image of the station, should not be encroached upon by an excessive amount of interruptions whether they be commercial or promotional.

Take a lesson from the radio station Sales Department manual and use radio sales as it should be used. "Buy" some time on the station itself during prime broadcasting hours to get the message across. If it is supposed to work for paying advertisers, then it should work for the station itself, too. Station promotional announcements are thought of as free, but there is nothing free about them. They could be the most expensive and the most valuable chunks of time on the air.

2. Piggy-back station activities with events that are already going to happen.

For example, if a major charity is going to be throwing a major fund-raising event like a show or a chili cook-off, get to the organizers far enough in advance to throw complete support behind their event. Then, they will use the station exclusively in promoting it. Ask for permission from the event sponsor to have station signs or banners at the event itself. Get the station logo or call letters included in their print material. Be a part of their press releases to the newspapers and television stations, perhaps on the posters, or even on the letterhead. This costs nothing other than the time of whomever on the staff takes the responsibility to work out the details and spearhead the station's participation.

A good aggressive radio station can find some significant public affairs event every month of the year and can make many of them appear to be their own promotions with the total expense nearly zero.

In putting together a promotional event that is connected to a charity, it is often much easier to go to the businesses with whom a commercial relationship already exists and get them to contribute materials such as printing or food, that will be used at the event itself. After all, they are doing it for the ultimate success of the fund-raising event itself, the charity, and then, vicariously, for the radio station involved.

Promotion and positioning the station within the community for public affairs events is an excellent way to gain free and positive publicity. In mentioning positive publicity, there are some causes or charitable organizations which, for one reason or another, tend to polarize certain members of the population. Therefore, it is always a good idea to double check an involvement with some non-profit organizations to be sure that they represent the same ideals that the station represents. Some examples of these are social organizations or non-profit organizations that deal with health issues, sexual issues, educational issues, political alliances (some organizations may have affiliations which would alienate a portion of the audience, while gratifying another portion of it). Select promotional opportunities that can effect the largest number of people and in as many cases as possible, try to associate with community events where large numbers of people are involved and where the potential for large crowds and maximum station exposure exists.

3. A few other ways to promote that don't require any major expense are to be at the right place at the right time. Among these are:

A. If the station has a vehicle, make sure it is painted front, back, and sides so that no matter which direction the vehicle is pointing and no matter where it is parked the call letters are obvious. It's a good idea to paint call letters on the roof of the car just like police cars sometimes print their number on the roof so they can be visible from the air. If there's an airport with planes coming in and out, people are going to remember a car they see with call letters on the roof.

B. Never let the News Department go out of the building without call letters on their microphones. Microphone flags are inexpensive, but worth their weight in gold when seen on nightly television at news conferences, or the front page of the daily paper.

C. Make sure all station personnel are identified in public. For a few dollars apiece, an attractive name tag can be fashioned for each member of the radio station staff. Include office personnel who participate in promotions. Nobody should have to ask if someone works at the station. Make name tags consistent with colors selected for station identity. Be consistent with call letters (lettering) and the logo, too.

D. A popular way for radio stations to get publicity without having to pay (cash) for it, is barter or trade agreements with other businesses. By using unsold inventory on the air in exchange for other business goods and services, the station can access everything from sign painters, printers, balloon manufacturers and sky writers to billboards, newspapers and television.

E. Frequently, television, newspaper and billboard trade agreements are expensive and may involve annual commitments. In many cases they require (or are enhanced by) cash commitment along with the trade agreement. In dealing with smaller merchants at a lower level, items that normally cost just a few hundred dollars can very easily be traded. Every radio station function should have it's own custom made paper cups and plates, balloons, posters, name tags, banners and whatever signs may be appropriate for station events.

F. Use printed materials. Table tents to place on tables in restaurants or night clubs where the station may be appearing. Leave behind flyers that you can put on tables and chairs and seats and pass out at remote locations that outline the station's programming activities or that contain coupons or entry blanks for contests can almost always be traded through a local printer. Any opportunity you have to place the station logo plus some additional information about the station itself in front of a crowd is excellent for reinforcing the station identity.

G. Look for opportunities to exchange program space with community theatres, School Plays, public functions, concerts where advertising space is available in the material that is passed out to those attending. When done right, none of this costs anything. You are just exchanging services. That's what barter is all about. It's an under-used opportunity, especially for small and medium market stations.

H. At functions like movie openings, concerts, or shows where there has been no actual ticket used, it is easy for a radio station to print its own, making sure that every station event has a ticket that is distributed in advance of the event. This reminds the listener of the upcoming event and, because there is a tangible representation of the event in the form of a ticket, the event is less likely to be forgotten. This usually insures greater participation.

I. Use (favorably exploit) air personalities. Radio personalities accept this fact: If you're going to be a public person, then wherever you go, you represent the radio station. It just goes with the territory. This is not a nine-to-five job for anyone in the business, and any member of the air staff known to the audience by being listened-to is similarly known to the audience when seen in public. The opportunities for members of the air staff to participate in public events as individuals representing the station is considerable. I would encourage each announcer, including (if not especially including) evening, overnight, and weekend personalities, to be available to volunteer for telethons, to judge any type of celebrity event that may be occurring in the city, to work as a telephone operator for a fund-raising pledge drive, to volunteer for any type of charitable function where they can possibly gain notice through another medium and certainly be recognized by the public. This also includes speaking engagements for those members of the staff who are comfortable addressing luncheons or dinner meetings.

J. If the air staff is blessed with persons talented in other areas, by all means promote such appearances. Consider that their experience as musicians, actors in community theatre, magicians, cooks, athletes, or whatever other areas of expertise they may possess can impact favorably upon their association with the radio station.

4. Another way promotions can come to the radio station at no cost is through commercial opportunities. Advertising clients sometimes like to run station promotions as part of their own promotion. The station participates with them in exchange for some advertising dollars. Frequently, radio stations will be asked to participate in promotions by motion picture companies or by national marketing groups that are looking for some kind of exposure in the market. They may be travel agents, hotel chains, airlines that serve the community, restaurant groups that are doing grand openings, or other businesses that are coming to town and are looking to augment their promotional budget by bringing a radio station on board as a partner.

5. Finally we must never lose sight of this: The promotion must promote the radio station. It doesn't matter what form it takes or who else participates (within reason). In some cases, no promotion is better than a poor promotion, or a promotion that is not targeted toward the type of listener the station wants. Be careful when selecting promotions, whether they are paid or whether they are free, that the opportunity to present the promotion is compatible with the image of the radio station. Is it something the station can live with before, during, and after the promotion?

Chapter 33: Advertising-Print

Ever since radio started in the 1920's the relationship between it and newspapers has been one of love/hate. Many early radio stations were owned by newspapers. During the heyday of program-oriented radio (1930's-1950's), many of the largest and most influential radio stations in the country were part of major newspaper publishing groups. Today, most of those associations are gone, mostly by legislation prohibiting cross-ownership of Radio-TV-Newspapers except in cases where the ownership had been "grandfathered" under the legislation. Although very few cross-ownership situations exist today, most markets enjoy some cross-promotional opportunities with area newspapers, usually on a reciprocal trade basis. Television stations also take advantage of this relationship by involving both newspapers and radio in major promotions.

More than any other medium, newspapers have also been the adversary of radio Sales. Even now, most radio station Sales Departments position the newspaper as their biggest rival for advertising dollars (including revenue spent on other radio stations). Although the two media compete for advertising, they rarely compete for audience. It's safe to say that nearly 100% of all radio listeners also spend some time regularly with a newspaper and vice-versa. To that purpose, it is realistic to expect that using newspapers to promote radio stations makes sense.

The primary benefits of newspaper advertising are:

1. wide variety of ad sizes available
2. size and frequency of ad determines cost
3. placement can be targeted to specific reader interest
4. ads are relatively inexpensive to create/produce
5. ads are tangible, can be copied, clipped, or re-read
6. multiple publications can increase diversity

Let's break down these benefits and look at how they can best be used for the station.

1. Wide variety of ad sizes available. Best use of:

a. full-page or half-page ads are for major "breaking" events like format changes, major contests, or kickoff of major programming or community events.

b. medium sized ads are for personality profiles, music positioning (lists of songs or artists), contest rules.

c. smaller ads are for reinforcement of formats, slogans, sports events, personality dayparts, phone numbers, call letter/dial position.

2. Size and frequency of ad determines cost.

a. Best time to buy newspaper space is annually when station budgets are developed and to guarantee placement for key issues. Longer contract length, high frequency of ad usage can bring rates down.

b. Reinforcement ads can run daily or minimum weekly, small reminders of station identity to keep call letters visible on a regular basis.

c. Full-page and half-page ads should be scheduled quarterly, unless a major event (such as format change), then weekly for 5-8 weeks, before, during and after event date.

d. Medium size ads are best scheduled to provide more in depth information about station feature, personality, or event.

3. Placement can be targeted to specific reader interest.

a. Newspapers have a wide selection of sections, if not daily, then weekly dealing with a variety of subjects of specific interests. For example: Sports, financial, gardening travel, food, automotive, comics, book/literature, weather, politics, events, entertainment, cultural, international, police beat, education, environment, etc.

b. Establish life-group or listener profile of station's target potential listener, then cater to that interest by exposure in specific newspaper section.

NOTE: This is a key, important benefit of radio advertising in newspapers. Do not accept substitute sections or random placement. Make section placement a part of your contractual deal.

4. Ads are relatively inexpensive to create/produce.

a. Most papers offer basic art/layout services as part of package. Usually very inexpensive, but also usually very plain and simple. Not particularly recommended for creative work. Suggest station work with graphic artist or ad agency to develop artwork, copy and provide copy-ready art to newspaper. Stations should use graphic/layout skills as part of job description for someone on staff like promotions director.

b. Stations should also have an in-house desktop publishing computer or art/graphics program and at least one employee skilled in its operation. This can save lots of money in the long run, provide versatility and flexibility. Graphics can also be used for flyers, mail pieces, internal forms, sales presentations.

c. Many ads can be re-used at other newspapers, both daily and weekly.

d. Ads should not be cluttered with copy. Call letters and dial position should be prominent and often included more than once in each ad. (Once on the logo, once in the small print). The purpose of a newspaper ad should be singular, sell one benefit per ad. Rotate different ads to expose multiple benefits. Some experts suggest lots of white space for the printed message to be more prominent.

5. Ads are tangible, can be copied, clipped, or re-read.

a. People like things they can use as tangible reference. Coupon clipping is a national consumer epidemic. Newspaper ads containing information about sale merchandise is often carried to point of purchase with the instructions, "I want one of THESE!"

b. A simple dotted line around a print ad suggests that it can be cut out and saved. Consider sports team schedules, talk show lineups, contest hours, weekend programming, request/weather/newsline, etc. phone numbers. Newspaper articles or informational ads can be duplicated on a copy machine for readers to share.

c. The opportunity for re-reading or multiple reading by other family members.

6. Multiple publications can increase diversity.

a. Explore publication opportunities with all possible types of print media distributors. Initial reaction is to think only of the major daily papers, but the specific nature of radio lends itself to several other types of publications worthy of consideration.

b. More esoteric publications are usually dirt-cheap for advertising, and many accept trade in exchange for publicity, exposure, and pick-up/purchase locations.

Here's our list of types of publications to consider:

1. Regional, state or national newspapers with local inserts, including union publications.
2. Major daily newspapers. (Big announcements need all dailies involved, most readers subscribe to only one daily, so at least alternate among several dailies for complete exposure on reinforcement ads.)
3. Weekly newspapers, including:
 - Black, Hispanic, or other Ethnic groups
 - Senior citizen
 - Trade newspapers for key employers in community
 - Suburban news
 - Shoppers special publications
 - Trading posts (automotive, real estate, household)
4. Monthly or Quarterly publications, including:
 - Arts and Cultural
 - Community or Neighborhood newsletters
 - Recreation (bowling, square-dance, softball, etc)
 - Religious
5. Call around to print shops who specialize in newsletters or newsprint publications. Ask them for the names of some of their clients for whom they print material. Then, go directly to those clients and inquire about getting your station message included.
6. Several successful stations have started printing their own newspaper/newsletter or producing a seemingly local station paper from nationally prepared shells. This gives the station regular print exposure (providing the station secures distribution or circulation numbers of its publication readership), as well as the opportunity to sell its own newspaper advertising. So, if you can't beat 'em...join 'em!

Elsewhere in this book, we talking about street-fighter promotion called guerrilla promotion. In it we discuss ways to get the word out about the radio station in less conventional ways. In both guerrilla and regular promotion, using another kind of publication is extremely important. I don't mean newspapers, I mean printed material for direct distribution or review by listeners. Generally, there are a number of print shops in every market that are amenable to some sort of trade/barter arrangement, or at least some low cost, on-going relationship with a radio station.

There are flyers and simple notices, but the most effective printed piece is The Radio Station Program Guide, handed out at every radio station event. This print piece contains the station logo along with a list of representative musical artists heard on the station, as well as other featured programs, the times they are on, the air staff line-up, and perhaps a sponsorship logo in case a sponsor would like to contribute to the printing cost of the piece. These are very effective for leave-behinds at all kinds of station functions, from concerts to street fairs, at sponsorship locations, mailed or picked-up at the station. They can be included in all station mail sent to advertisers, listeners, or casual correspondence. They can also be handed out at theatres and community events. People do get to read them, unlike a refrigerator magnet or a pen or some such thing which people tend to discard or overlook.

Even though this item may ultimately be discarded, it can create a number of impressions before it does. And so you should print on the top, bottom, back, and the front and have as much information as possible. This item should be presented as something a listener might want to stick on the refrigerator door or thumbtack up on the bulletin board or something to use as a reference for special programs are on the air. A Program Guide also reinforces the correct spelling of announcer names and useful phone numbers to the station, like the News or Request/Contest line. Print pieces can benefit in some unlikely ways such as jotting down the phone number of a new friend.

Successful promotions have been done using print for small tabletop tents (little signs put on tabletops in restaurants) where people sit for 30 minutes or more, have their meal and get a chance to look at a tabletop presentation by the radio station. This can be in conjunction with a restaurant which has an advertising relationship with the station. Also, if the station has any sort of an event or function at a restaurant itself, or at a banquet hall, then these tabletop tents could just be simple single-fold tent pieces of paper with radio station information and the logo on it. They also can be used as raffle tickets. By being numbered, people attending certain events can take them home with them or, better still, win prizes. One of the other unlikely uses of paper supplies and printing would be with napkins. Either cocktail napkins or dinner napkins (more especially cocktail napkins), which are convenient when the station has a special event at which beverages are served. There it is... a cocktail napkin with the station logo on it, staring at them every time they take a sip.

These methods are subtle, but they are frequently overlooked, inexpensive reinforcement opportunities to make your station a winner. A station seeking every aspect of every opportunity to promote itself will be far more successful, and memorable, than a station that assumes everything and does nothing to hammer home its image to listeners and non-listeners. Reinforce the station logo, the dial position, and a one or two word format description. Elaborate printing may include some of the artists the station features, or even the station lineup.

There's always a cost advantage in printing these sorts of things in large quantities, but if there is any chance that someone affiliated with the station might be moving on, then don't commit too far ahead. Basic, unchanging things like names of artists and features, likely to be a part of station programming for an extended period of time, should be included.

Most people attending station events like to have a good time. Therefore, it's always important to reinforce the radio station logo, it's image, it's dial position, at the same time that the audience is having a good time. Simple psychology: associate the good time with the call letters, with the name of the radio station and make that positive impression recreate itself every time they hear about the station or when they see the station logo. It's a case of simple psychological reinforcement -- from Pavlov's dogs to modern communications. The more opportunities you can create to put the call letters and the dial position and the station logo (or any other small bits of information) in front of the audience, the more opportunities exist to create an extended impression beyond what is done on the air.

Occasionally, for the aggressive station programmer, a printed item can be useful at diffusing a competitor's event. In a typical guerrilla operation, hand out printed matter regarding your station as attendees leave a competitor's concert. I can recall more than one occasion where a competitor (in the same format) got to host a major event. Armed with numbered program guides, our staff politely greeted each person as they left the venue after the concert, thanking them sincerely for supporting the format (Country, in this case), and presenting them with a numbered program guide for our station. Then, we requested them to listen on the way home and in the morning, because we'll be announcing the guide numbers on the air and awarding prizes and cash.

Chapter 34: Advertising-Television

For any radio station to succeed, the word must be spread throughout the community about the benefits of listening. While it is true, as we have illustrated in other chapters, that many stations do not take full advantage of their own resources, still there's only so much you can accomplish talking only to existing listeners. At some point, the station needs to reach out to non-listeners with a design to bring them into the station family.

Every Program Director dreams of creating a format that will spread like wildfire due to its sheer popularity and enjoy a 100 share by exclusive virtue of word of mouth advertising. Real life seems to fall somewhat short of this ideal because, even if every one did talk to every one else, the message would be diluted and/or distorted. When a radio station makes use of other media to promote itself, it is hardly an admission of its own ineffectiveness. Rather, it is an exercise in common sense by attacking a target with an array of weapons. Just as we tell advertisers that Radio makes a good compliment to TV and print campaigns, so must we too make use of all our opportunities in order to achieve our own objectives.

Radio and Television are both broadcast media. After that, they have very little in common. Radio survives by formats, TV by individual programs. No advertising package for TV is put together based upon the station, but rather on demographics delivered by individual programming. An advertising agency is more likely to buy a greater selection of TV stations than radio stations for an ad campaign. For example, four or five TV stations may be selected utilizing several different programs on each station to put together an effective advertising campaign. Each program appeals individually to the lifestyle or demographic in the target. In the same market, there may be only one (or maybe two) Radio stations delivering the same demographic, but they do so exclusively and at all times.

In selecting Television as a medium to advertise radio, the lifestyle issue is often as important as the demographic. There are lots of folks out there between the ages of 25 and 54, but which ones are likely to listen to your station? The TV programs watched by a country music fan may differ widely from a classical music lover or a talk show junkie. By carefully selecting the placement of your station's message with the TV programs closely linked with your potential listeners' lifestyle, the message will be far more effective than if the ad placement was selected on the basis of demographic criteria alone.

Cable has further fragmented TV schedules into even more diverse and specific programming selections. Cable advertising has benefitted from the same general advertising opportunities as periodical magazines; that is, of catering to specific interests. As cable saturation in every market continues to grow and the number of cable channels increases, the opportunity for effective and economical placement of a radio station message becomes even greater. Cable operators tend to be less expensive than on-the-air TV, so there can be some expense spared.

The drawbacks to Cable are:

1. Cable is not supported by any consistent ratings service, therefore documentation of audience size is speculative.
2. Only those homes wired for cable will get the message.
3. Even though a majority of homes may be wired for cable, most preferred programming still comes from Networks who have a regular TV station affiliate. If your message isn't on those stations, then it won't be seen by the largest audience
4. Many markets have more than one cable operator/system, making a market-wide advertising campaign difficult. Often these operators compete with each other for subscribers, making cooperation difficult.
5. Cable systems have only a limited coverage area and therefore may not be available in areas where a station may otherwise have listener growth opportunities.

The TV SPOT

Radio stations should be clearly defined so they can be remembered and recalled. We discussed in the chapter on Station Identity how important it is to project a simple, positive, unique image to the public. By using TV advertising to carry the message further, a clear selection of the appropriate program selections is of utmost importance. Some simple research into the TV viewing habits of existing listeners may give a strong clue as to the proper placement of advertising to reach non-listeners with similar tastes. Therefore, in selecting a TV message, simplicity is even more important.

There are dozens of excellent TV Spot producers out there who can offer you custom made spot. They will work with you to put together a good, attractive message, using local locations, your own talent, custom music and a wide selection of logos and graphics. These spots are expensive, and realistically, out of reach of all but the largest markets.

Many of these companies will also offer a pre-recorded spot which can be customized for your station. There are disadvantages and advantages to them, which are:

Advantages:

1. High quality production
2. Lower cost than a custom produced spot, since many stations in different markets can use the same material
3. Already researched on similar audiences
4. Usually some evidence of effectiveness from prior users
5. No involvement required with local producers
6. Works best with non-personality formats or "cookie cutter" formats. (You don't have to admit it, but you know who you are.)

Disadvantages:

1. May not reflect your community/market image
2. No creative input from the station
3. Cannot significantly alter the spot, you get it as-is
4. You don't own it, renewal fees are required for re-use
5. Risk of audience seeing same spot in other markets

The other alternative is to have a TV commercial produced locally. This service is often provided as a part of an advertising package purchased from a TV Station or Cable operator in the same way that the production of a radio spot is a part of a radio station package. It is recommended that the station approach the TV station or independent producer with some concept or ideas about the message. At the very least, have a mission statement of what the desired outcome is. Make that statement specific.

WRONG: We want more listeners

RIGHT: We want females 25-44 to know we play soft rock

If the radio station regularly works through an advertising agency, then tap into their resources to put together your spot. Many stations farm out their advertising to agencies just like a retail client might do. If this is the case, be sure that there is someone from the station who is involved in the creative process. Too often, advertising agencies don't understand radio (or they would place more client advertising), much less what the station message needs to be. Many agencies are trying to win local commercial awards...but not with your station's money, thanks. Cleverness is not as important in winning a new audience for a radio station as is simplicity and consistency.

In the event that you do not use an agency and need to do a home-grown spot, all is not lost. Simple graphics and artwork can be very effective in delivering a basic message.

Here is a list of basic spot ideas that can be effective:

1. Identifiable station personality on camera, direct appeal
2. Spokesperson (someone NOT on the station) direct appeal
3. Slice of life appeal by on camera spokesperson in your target demographic...he/she LOOKS like a listener
4. Music formats - list primary artists scrolling on camera while off-camera spokesperson lists features/benefits.
5. Music formats - play identifiable artists or selections
6. Man-on-the-street testimonials from people who look like target listeners

If you decide to put together your own spot, here are some basic rules:

1. Call letters AND Dial position ON CAMERA for at least: 10 seconds of a 30 second spot and 5 seconds of a 10 second spot
2. Call letters AND Dial position always last on the screen
3. If station has LOGO, use it. If LOGO is unclear on TV, use easy to read letters
4. Use an identifier slogan (what you call yourself and report to Arbitron) at least once

5. If station uses a color scheme, use it on TV if a true representation of your station colors comes across on TV, otherwise, use basic colors
6. Don't clutter the spot with too much copy. Just make 2 or 3 basic points
7. Don't use station personnel as talent unless they are on the air personalities and appear as themselves
8. Does the audio portion of your spot stand alone as if it were a radio spot? It should.
9. Does the video portion of your spot stand alone without the audio? It should also.

NOTE: for items #8 & #9, many people only hear a TV spot from the next room or while not gazing at the picture. Many others periodically mute the sound (especially during commercial breaks)...think about it!

Cleverness and originality are important in any television advertising, especially for radio stations. Don't miss the point, however. The cleverness or originality **MUST** reinforce or direct viewer attention toward a benefit that is offered by the radio station. Too often, commercials are remembered, but not the station.

If the station is music intensive, then showcase the music in a clever or original way. If personality dominated, give the TV commercial viewer something about your personalities to remember, likewise for ALL-News, Talk or type of format. If your station is represented by a slogan, mascot, or character, reinforce those identities with the station. Hats and horns, bells and whistles are all fun and exciting and feed our egos to the degree that "...weren't we so brilliant to come up with such an idea," but does the audience share in our enthusiasm and get the message?

THE TV SCHEDULE

Taking a chapter from our own radio sales pitch, frequency is the key in television advertising as well. Talk to the television station sales representative about the schedule with the knowledge that **NO** viewer gets the complete message on a single showing of a commercial. Several research studies indicate that most television messages don't begin to achieve viewer recognition until they have been seen at least 3 or 4 times. Therefore, when selecting a schedule for television, try to reach the same audience -- the target audience -- at least 3 or 4 times during the advertising campaign.

Television viewers are creatures of habit and tend to watch the same programs from day to day and week to week. Take advantage of this captive audience and give them several opportunities to accurately understand your complete message.

Program loyalty is important to television advertising. Once the advertising team has identified an audience upon which the TV commercial can have the greatest impact, schedule the commercial so that audience will see it ON THOSE PROGRAMS several times.

As is the case with all advertising campaigns, media experts agree that advertising works best when there is a combined effort to use more than one source for presenting the message. Like outdoor advertising, television has the ability to place a visual identity on a normally invisible medium, such as radio.

Television advertising needs to be planned in advance and not rushed. Television and cable stations have fewer local opportunities to place commercials than radio does and the prime programming is the first to go. Don't get caught with the leftovers. It may not always be possible to completely dominate television, due to cost and availability of commercial opportunities, so look for specific audiences, lifestyle groups, or key demographics and dominate at least one of them.

The goals of TV advertising for radio are:

1. To have the TV spot represent a key benefit of the radio station
2. To give an accurate impression of what the station represents, formatically
3. To have the TV spot seen and understood in its entirety during the advertising schedule
4. To reinforce any other advertising/promotion identities used by the station

While involved in the negotiations with a TV station and with the intention of spending some money with them, the door is open for a discussion of how RADIO can benefit the television station in ITS next promotional campaign...use that opportunity!

Chapter 35: Advertising-Outdoor

Outdoor advertising and radio have been a long-time partnership. Most media experts agree that advertising works best when there is a concerted effort to combine more than one advertising source to present a message. Outdoor advertising has the ability to give something normally invisible, such as a radio station, a visual identity. Outdoor advertising is largely a matter of the availability of board locations relative to the station's target audience. Most cities have more than one outdoor advertising company, so there is frequently a game of jockeying for position in selecting board locations and the best deal, financially. Unlike newspapers and TV, outdoor advertising is usually less receptive to trade or barter arrangements; but occasionally offer some attractive packages for radio stations to utilize unsold billboards.

Incidentally, by outdoor, we mean generally roadside billboards. Although technically any other outdoor media qualifies, including bus benches, bus sides, cab tops, etc. A few words about those later in this chapter.

There is a disagreement about billboards. Some experts say, "lots of white space and only use 7 or 8 words total." For a while I thought they had a valid point, especially if I was whizzing by at 55 MPH and had one chance to comprehend the message on the board. This philosophy works great for nationally known products where name recognition is important concept while regularly stuck in traffic on the same road every day at the same time and had an opportunity to read every board 50 times a day. Since radio is a local medium, and out of town through traffic is NOT our target audience, doesn't it make more sense to cater to local commuters by spending some quality time with them via our billboard. The opportunity to tell a radio station's story on a billboard is greatly understated by traditional theories of what is correct. A billboard should be neat and uncluttered; but lists of artists, personalities, features, sports and other benefits should be considered.

Since billboards are seen by people in cars, a billboard should ask for the order. It should beckon the driver to turn on the radio NOW. Therefore, I suggest the most important message a billboard can convey is LISTEN NOW! Other than the radio station itself, only a billboard addresses a potential listener at whatever time, day or night, is convenient to their schedule and with a radio within easy reach.

Outdoor advertising should be easily readable day or night with prominent placement of CALL LETTERS and DIAL POSITION. If you're going to ask someone to listen, the first question is, "Where is it on the dial?"

NOTE: Every station on FM from 88 to 108 has a potential counterpart on the AM dial (880 to 1080, especially 88 to 99) so if you use a rounded off numerical dial position, specify AM or FM. Just the number 92 or 97 or 99 should always require FM or AM designations. I suggest AM or FM be included on all billboards.

A billboard should tell a station's whole story and convey an immediate benefit to potential listeners. Take a look at some of the radio station billboards in nearby communities. How many just don't tell you what you need to know? How many ask more questions than they answer? Worse, how many assume you already know everything about the station?

Here are some poor messages:

All the hits. All the time. (What format?)

Turtleville's most familiar music. (To whom?)

Serving Turtleville since 1938. (Yawn!)

Best hits of the 60's, 70's, 80's, 90's. (Nothing like narrowing it down! What format?)

Greatest Hits of Yesterday. (Elvis or Bing?)

All the News You Need. (Shouldn't I decide that?)

(Call letters) Turn it on! (Give me one good reason.)

(Call letters) (No dial position, AM or FM.)

The best music, the best news. (Let me decide.)

Home of Fighting Turtle Football. (Football season only.)

#1 in Turtleville. (Station ranking is no motivation.)

Turtleville's FIRST station. (Now I know where to listen if I ever become a time traveler.)

Billboards can reinforce the overall image of a station all year. Another effective use of billboards on a shorter term is to reinforce a specific HOT promotion or event that the station is supporting. Even so, include the basic, whole story of the station so it works for you even if the promotion does not.

Other types of Outdoor media include:

Bus Sides (or interior)
Cab Tops
Bus Benches/Bus Stops
Subway/Rail Station boards

Many of these types of outdoor visibility are regulated by local ordinances. Many city transportation systems do not permit advertising on public conveyance vehicles. Station visibility cannot be overstated, just carefully select the placement. My personal worst place for radio station advertising is on the back of a bus. It certainly gets seen, but following in traffic right behind a bus is probably one of the least desirable spots on earth. Between limited visibility, slow progress, and gagging on diesel fumes, a highly negative impression is probable, no matter how otherwise effective the message might be.

Despite what their promotion/sales department says, these types of outdoor advertising are seen more by pedestrians than by drivers.

1. Bus benches cannot be seen at all by drivers when people are sitting on them.
2. Bus stop boards cannot be seen when people are standing in front of them waiting for a bus
3. The same applies to train station boards.
4. There is never a guarantee of a clear, unobstructed message, except by pedestrians, first to arrive.
5. Just one person standing directly in front of a bus stop/train station board can obscure the entire message.
6. Pedestrians cannot "turn on the radio, NOW!" as drivers can, so the immediacy of an action message is lost.

Bus stops, benches, and subway/train stations are largely neighborhood locations. Placement of this type of advertising should be determined more by the match between the neighborhood or area itself and the demographic/lifestyle target of the station. When putting together an advertising plan for a radio station, one of the most important rules is to use your resources wisely. Although every radio can attract a widely divergent group of listeners, practically speaking, it makes sense to develop a stereotypical profile of a listener to use as a guide in making advertising decisions.

An example of a stereotypical rule-of-thumb listener profile might include the following list of considerations in placing subway/train/bus stop advertising:

<u>Station format</u>	<u>Neighborhood/location</u>
Urban	= Black/Hispanic
Country	= Blue collar/industrial
Easy Listening	= Older/retirement/office
CHR	= Yuppie/preppie (any age)
Hard rock	= High school
Oldies	= Blue collar/middle class
MOR	= Upper middle class/older
AC	= Upper middle class/younger
News/Info	= Business/financial
Dance	= Gay or ethnic
Classical	= Cultural/college/upper class
Jazz	= College/black

Although this is an incomplete and imperfect list, it gives an idea of how to start thinking of your listeners in their natural habitats. When spending cash for advertising, make the most of it, eliminate all wasted effort and aim at a target you have some possibility of hitting. Even if the station has no cash budget and needs to rely on trade for its advertising, go into the arrangement with a plan of what needs to be accomplished and try to achieve those goals.

Chapter 36: Advertising-Direct Mail

One of the most effective techniques for reaching a specific audience (or potential audience) for radio is to literally "ask for the order." A letter or advertising piece sent directly to listeners via the U.S. Postal Service. Although effective, in most cases, a direct mail piece from a radio station must avoid one devastating characteristic:

A DIRECT MAIL PIECE MUST NOT LOOK LIKE JUNK MAIL

In addition to the overall appearance and attractiveness of the mail piece, the real secret to effective direct mail advertising is the accuracy of the mailing lists provided. Most mailing companies can offer very specific mailing areas (whole communities right on down to individual neighborhoods) or demographics. The direct mail advertising piece for radio stations should be specific to the needs and provide benefits for those persons selected to be a part of the mail target and who could realistically be converted to regular station listeners.

Since most major retailers, publishers, and almost every other type of business has gotten on the direct mail bandwagon, Americans are getting a greater volume of mail every day than ever before -- the bulk postage alone amounts to roughly \$60 billion annually. Due to the unprecedented demand for mail pieces, the costs have become quite reasonable. The only guaranteed hard cost for a direct mail piece is the fixed postal rate, and even that can be variable. Because direct mail is tailor-made for each station (or should be), each design and message is unique for each station. Information on direct mail is readily available from dozens of suppliers. After all, they do printing for a living so it's only natural that they can provide you with countless examples of their work.

For the sake of clarification and definition, a direct mail piece is a letter or printed material sent directly to listeners through the mail for the purpose of increasing listenership. As in all Sales transactions, nothing happens until you "ask for the order". In this case, the radio station is essentially "asking" the listener for the opportunity to sample the station. For this reason, the message should be specific, personal, and appealing. Furthermore, there should be some form of obvious benefit to the recipient of the letter other than to find out more about the station. This benefit can be in the form of an opportunity to play and win a contest, or more casually, the opportunity to enjoy unique entertainment, information and feature material available via your programming.

The kind of direct mail often used by radio stations falls into three basic categories:

1. An introduction/description of the radio station, including:
 - a. MUSIC format, including lists of songs or artists and a description of the general appeal of the music played, defining it as clearly as possible
 - b. INFORMATION and credibility, including network affiliations, news personalities, weather/traffic services, special informational programming
 - c. PERSONALITIES, show times, features, recognition, identity, community popularity
 - d. EVENTS of station participation including sports, parades, fund-raisers, etc.
 - e. SCHEDULE of personality day-parts, special programming
 - f. VISUALS, photos of station personnel, identifiable logos, vehicles, mascots, etc.
 - g. INVITATION to listen to the station including text designed to sell the idea of listening. The invitation can be in the form of an urgent message/call-to-action, i.e. LISTEN NOW!!! or personal appeal from a named station individual (G.M. or P.D.)

2. A contest piece, including:
 - a. GAME PIECE, ticket or lottery-type individual number
 - b. RULES of the contest, including eligibility and restrictions by age, multiple family members, station employees, time limits, etc.
 - c. LISTENING and how it enhances winning opportunities
 - d. PRIZES, including options, values, number of, purpose of, descriptions

3. An advertising piece, including:
 - a. MESSAGE about the radio station and an indication that the enclosed material is being provided by the station in the interest of its listeners
 - b. VALUES or coupons/gift certificates from sponsors
 - c. INFORMATION about merchants or businesses including names, addresses, hours, featured items, sales or discounts at station sponsorship locations
 - d. RELATIONSHIP between sponsors and radio station to explain or justify the connection between the two

Usually, an advertising piece is accompanied by a paid schedule on the station. This double-pronged approach lets radio Sales access advertiser dollars budgeted for direct mail, not radio. There are many excellent direct mail companies out there from which a wide variety of mail pieces can be selected. There are even a few who actually come to your market and assist your Sales Department in selling advertising or sell independently to clients already using some sort of direct mail. As these are usually not radio advertising clients, there is no conflict of selling "against" yourself. Consult with any trade publication to see the number of direct mail companies offering their services or call our office at MOR Media for some companies we use for our clients.

Chapter 37: Advertising-Guerrilla

Even the most carefully thought-out marketing plans, TV spots, billboards, or newspaper ads offer no guarantee that the radio station will succeed in its efforts to gain listeners or recognition. Often the least likely promotional efforts are the most remembered because of their unusual nature or unique appeal. Sometimes, stations with no outside advertising budget resort to what I call "Guerrilla advertising" out of necessity. There are no real rules for this type of promotion although a sense of humor and fair play don't hurt.

Timing is essential. Successful guerrilla opportunities occur by seizing the moment.

Assuming the station has its back to the wall, but needs to get the word out, there are countless ways to create visibility. Effective guerrilla advertising requires creativity and perception. Stations who use guerrilla tactics best are driven by highly creative (and usually humorous) Program Directors or Promotion Directors. As is the case with any other advertising approach, the goals and anticipated results should be mapped-out in advance; in this case however, advance may mean a few days or hours. The ability to size-up a situation is imperative. Like a military general ready to attack, go to the hilltop, see the enemy, know the terrain, assess the weaponry, and anticipate the manpower required to do the deed.

One of radio's best advantages over other media is it's ability to be immediate and portable. Radio can react instantly to any occasion. Therefore, radio should (in the guerilla mode) be ready to sieze upon any opportunity which may occur and for which there can be a benefit to the radio station, strategically, in establishing market identity.

Here are a few lists of thought provoking, no cost or low cost, guerrilla ideas. Can any of them be applied to your station?

Goal: To take over another station's event (concert, dance)

Weaponry: Buttons (I like station buttons, if only for these occasions), printed flyers with station information

Strategy: Get something into event attendees hands to make them think of your station, particularly right after the event or do things on the air to create the impression of your station's participation.

1. Pass out buttons or flyers about your station as people leave the other station's event.
2. Have your air personalities outside the building, (with name tags) shaking hands and thanking listeners for coming.
3. Have station vehicle parked on the closest public parking next to the other station's event. Give away free coffee, soda, or other items of small value.
4. Put your flyers on parked cars, thanking them for attending and inviting them to tune in to your station on the way home for a special contest, concert, etc.
5. Use station vehicle or public area, clearly identified with your station banner, as an entry blank sign-up location after the event for an upcoming contest. Winners name announced the following day on your morning show.
6. Host a post-event party at area club, need event ticket stub to get in.
7. Have a "mystery" person attend the event (buy a ticket) and hand out money or merchandise (gift certificates) to selected attendees who wear YOUR button at the event itself. Pre-promotion on the air is required.
8. If a concert, have special featured music by the artist before and after the event.
9. Get live interview with artist before the event
10. Give special traffic reports before and after the event.
11. Position station vehicle or air personalities at parking lot exit.
12. Offer on the air for people with ticket stubs to bring them to your station the following day for a free gift

Here's another example...

Goal: Get the word out about a new air personality

Weaponry: Phone, newspaper, printing

Strategy: Start word of mouth, on and off the air

1. Buy cheapest classified ads under a variety of headings:
For Sale: Morning show
For Rent: Radio studio 6am-10am
Business Opportunities: Commercials for sale
Personals: Lonely evening host wants calls.
New morning man craves affection
Educated, bright, witty, charming, attractive guy seeks 10,000 women
25-34 years of age to listen to his morning show.
2. Use entire staff, get phone book, call people personally, ask them to listen. He's new, he's a great guy and we think you'll like him. 50-100 calls per day, minimum.
3. New personality personally calls 20-30 business numbers per day, introduces himself, ask to listen.
4. Invite newspaper columnists, reporters to cover the story background of new personality.
5. Run single, tiny ads throughout newspapers with just a phone number and an invitation to call. Set up special number with message machine with new personality introducing himself and asking to listen.

Still, Another example:

Goal: To increase format awareness

Weaponry: Printing, Buttons.

Strategy: To expose primary, identifiable artists with your station call letters.

1. Print station logo on cocktail napkins/matchbooks and give FREE to any club or venue who features music from your format.
2. Be all over ANY concert appearance by ANY artist featured by your format. Give away commercials, donate blood, do whatever it takes! Don't let any other station have your artists.
3. Print flyers (program guides) with personality lineups, special programs, etc. Leave on seats or tables of concert venue.
4. Arrange photo session with artist and station personalities. Always include station call letters or logo in every picture.
5. Positioning on the air should include phrases like:
"When you hear Frank Sinatra, you must be listening to KTUR."
6. Print flyers with artist lists (minimum 10 artists), like:

KTUR Plays...

Tony Bennett, Peggy Lee
Frank Sinatra, Ella Fitzgerald
Johnny Mathis, Nat King Cole
Barbra Streisand, Count Basie
Andy Williams, Four Freshmen

KTUR (logo) AM 1610

7. Order very inexpensive buttons, ten different colors and artist names on each like:

Frank Sinatra is on KTUR AM 1610
Tony Bennett is on KTUR AM 1610
Peggy Lee is on KTUR AM 1610

Distribute to listeners to wear at all station events. Collect the whole set by introducing a different button each week. Station sales staff should wear a different one every day on client calls. Give to advertisers to wear or distribute in stores.

How about yet another example:

Goal: To announce or introduce a new format

Weaponry: Phone, printing

Strategy: Build anticipation, generate curiosity

1. Print cards that say, "COMING (date): A new radio station...KTUR AM 1610...LISTEN!" Pass out personally to businesses and individuals.
2. Pass out cards to businesses or in public places. Enlist a volunteer corps: Students, Senior Citizens, social groups. Find volunteers in the correct demographic for your station. Attractive persons to deliver or hand out material can be hired at modeling schools, often in exchange for trade advertising. Station can "pay" its volunteers with CD's, gift certificates, event tickets, etc.
3. Ask retail clients to put flyer in all purchase/packages.
4. During final days of old format, have fun, count down the hours to new format.
5. Give phony sneak-previews of new format by playing songs of everything but the music of the new format. If the new format details are still under wraps, confusion and anticipation will work in your favor.
6. Use special phone numbers for sales business, but let message machine answer all other incoming calls for last few days of old format. Message could say, "KTUR is getting ready for our new, exciting format starting at noon on Monday. Until then we have suspended normal business operations."
7. Print tags announcing the NEW station, call letters and dial position. Arrange to tag hundreds of radios (for a few days) at stereo stores, department stores, car radios at dealers, or any other place where a radio is sold. Offer promotional mentions or commercials on the air in exchange for the tagging promotion opportunities.
8. Make some physical change to the building so passersby will detect a change.
9. Set up a "listener-squad". Print cards with a special phone number on it and hand out in public locations to persons in the target demographic. Card explains when they should listen and why. Their opinions are valuable. The special phone number is to an answering machine that records comments called-in about the new format. If the station has interactive phone system, it can be set up for gathering more specific information.

To summarize: The unpredictability of radio lends itself to dozens of creative ways to promote. Look around, perceive, study. Don't be afraid to break old habits. Assume nothing. Try some of these ideas. Build on them. Adapt them to your situation.

The bottom line is: **YOU MUST WIN.**

Throw every effort, whether traditional or extraordinary at the winning process. People always recall the unusual more easily than the routine. Observe other businesses in action. See how they get the word out about their services and products. Are there any tactics they use that you can adapt to promoting your radio station? Don't be afraid to fail. In baseball, having a .300 batting average is considered excellent. But a .300 success rate also translates to a .700 failure rate. Most often, success is an event enjoyed by a minority of businesses, a minority of the time. Here's the lesson:

Extraordinary ideas come from great ideas.
Great ideas come from good ideas.
Good ideas come from failures.
Nothing comes from NO ideas

There can be neither success nor failure without an effort to try something.

Chapter 38: Public Service Announcements

Radio station Public Service Announcements (PSA's) have been a part of radio since the very beginning. Prior to actual commercial radio, stations provided information regarding civic and community events. Through the years, PSA's have embraced nearly every type of non-profit group, fund raising event, information distribution, or community activity.

The need to serve the community to which a station is licensed (or coverage area) cannot be overstated. Previously, a station could run any PSA by any agency, add up the total...and consider themselves in compliance. Even with the deregulation of radio station activities, the smart owners are still paying close attention to their commitments to community needs.

In most markets, stations now (individually or collectively) develop a list of community priorities ascertained from information acquired during interviews with civic and community leaders. The stations then state their list of ascertained community needs and proceed to address those issues through PSAs targeted toward them. There are no real restrictions in the type of needs to be addressed as long as there is community ascertainment to back them up.

For example, a station determined that unemployment is a high priority issue in their community. This goes on the station's list. Then, the station seeks out, develops or accepts PSA material from agencies directed toward unemployment, i.e. job counseling, hiring information, financial assistance, psychological counseling, unemployment benefits, etc.

In the Forms Section chapter in the back of this book, I have included a Public Service Personal Appearance form which is helpful in documenting when and where members of the staff actually attended and participated in Public Service events. Clearly, Public Service events are too numerous to be attended each and every time, but when you do attend and participate on carefully selected occasions, that should also be documented.

Here's a few tips to help in determining the best utilization of PSA's:

1. Make PSA's count. If done live, give the credibility of station personalities to them.
2. People don't listen to radio with a pen or pencil. Don't give phone numbers for PSA agencies, just a station number. Have the complete PSA material available when they call.
3. Keep them short. :10 to :15 seconds maximum. Radio works by repetition not length.
4. Make PSAs that conform to target demographic interests. For example, if the station is:
 - a. An older adult station, PSA's regarding children should be directed at grandchildren
 - b. A male-teen station, don't try to offer services common to middle age women
 - c. offering assistance for senior citizens at a contemporary country station, directed the PSA's toward the listeners parents or grandparents
5. Use common sense. Make the language match the listener. Seek out and use events or services aimed at target listeners. There's never a shortage of them.
6. Seek PSA opportunities to stroke advertisers. Finding out the civic involvement of some of key clients can give an edge when time comes to considering the station for an ad schedule. Be in a position to say yes when the bank president recalls, "Weren't you the station that helped with the hospital fund drive last year?"
7. Recorded PSA's can be a waste of time unless they are very clever OR tied in locally.
8. Never use specific or restricted announcements. Ask, "Can every member of my audience, man or woman, old or young attend this event and feel comfortable?"
9. For this reason, avoid soliciting membership for social or civic clubs who restrict membership, or who announce meetings or events that are open only to club members. It's not that these organizations don't often perform great civic functions, but air time is precious. Don't speak to a selective audience and leave out more people than you attract.
10. Participate in community Public Service events. Look for opportunities to actually participate in them. A little attention to a civic agency (who have to go begging most of the time) can work wonders for image.
11. Creating unique Public Service events sponsored by community organizations. Approach them with co-sponsorship. Position the station prominently at the event, especially those where large crowds might be expected.

All PSA's are written as liner cards. Each should include:

1. Name, Date, Time of event
2. Brief description of event
3. Official name of sponsoring agency
4. Station phone number

Mark these important elements with a highlighting pen. Put them at the top of the liner card. Elsewhere, put all the other specifics and things to tell a listener who calls.

Also suggested is a datebox, which is a simple rubber stamp made at any neighborhood rubber stamp store. A datebox is 10 square horizontal boxes. (There is an order form for the rubber stamp, which you may purchase directly from MOR Media, in the back of this book.) As each announcer reads the PSA, he dates and initials the next open box. Subsequently, the announcer should look for the last date and time each was aired, being especially mindful of his own usage. This provides a certain amount of control and avoids repeating the same PSAs during the same shift. It also identifies PSAs which are receiving less air-time than they should. Every new liner card should be stamped with a datebox to immediately indicate that it is to be read 10 times.

Of course, after the first run, you can add an additional row of datebox stamps for longer exposure of that particular PSA. Here's a typical datebox with notations in the boxes indicating the date read and announcer initials:



If each PSA is read 10 times and there are 10-15 different PSAs in rotation, then they will not be overly repetitious. Depending upon how many are scheduled per day, offer a wide variety of interesting opportunities for listeners each week.

6/18 LW	7/16 BZ	7/19 LW	7/26 JF	7/29 PS	8/4 KB	8/6 LW	8/7 RE	8/10 KB	8/11 RE
8/13 BZ	8/14 LW								

Have the station Traffic Department include this line either at the bottom or the top of each Program Log page:

"This hour's PSA _____"

The blank line is for writing in the name of the PSA agency. The announcer then logs his own PSAs, one per hour, as the cards rotate through the number of available PSAs.

After the PSA has run 10 times and the datebox is filled, remove it from rotation and replace it with a new one. File the old liner card under the appropriate community need to keep a record of it. Completed cards provide a dated, documented record of actual performance of community service.

To get the most out of Public Service announcements, relate station efforts to the agency sponsoring the event. In the forms section of this book, there is a sample invoice to present to a community organization on station letterhead. This attaches a value to PSAs and indicates in financial terms the value of free announcements. This shows how much it would cost a commercial client to receive the same amount of air-time.

Additionally, staff attendance at Public Service events should also be noted. Therefore, we have also included a form designed to outline and document such attendance. Copies of this form should be included with all other documentation concerning the issues to be addressed by the stations Public Service ascertainment policies.

Chapter 39: Health Tips

Working on the air at a radio station is generally clean and easy work with no heavy lifting and no likelihood of being subjected to any health dangers. Yet there are a few maladies that recur among radio station employees. A common ailment of announcers is a sore throat. Sometimes an announcer just becomes exhausted vocally and the sore throat is not symptomatic of any greater illness. When it's serious and diagnosed as such, then get professional medical treatment. However, the simple irritated sore throat that many of us suffer because we spend hours on the air or at some public function can be easily corrected.

SORE THROAT This homemade concoction is the best potion I ever tried.

- 1/4 cup Listerine or similar oral antiseptic
- Juice from 1 lemon
- Two tablespoons of table salt
- Four pulverized aspirin
- 1/4 cup hot water

Dissolve the aspirin in the hot water, then add all the other ingredients until you have a liquid containing the antiseptic, lemon juice, table salt, aspirin, and hot water. Gargle with this combination hourly for one to two minutes each time. Especially before going to bed and overnight (should you arise during the evening for other purposes.) For some reason this gargle mixture has gotten me through dozens of minor sore throat irritations over the years. It doesn't taste *terrible*, but you wouldn't want to swallow much of it, either.

BACKACHE The next common ailment seems to be miscellaneous back discomfort. I have found a simple remedy for occasional back discomfort by going right to the source.

The wallet in the rear pocket.

Sitting on a wallet that is half an inch thick or more is the same as sitting on a block of wood of the same size. It places an undo pressure on the nerves on the hip and causes you to sit slightly off center. Believe it or not, when I first changed my behavior and began removing my wallet from my trousers prior to sitting down for doing an air shift, I found that my backache and subsequent headaches stopped almost instantly.

Chapter 40: Syndicated Programming

Radio programming can originate from a variety of sources. If we assume that the basic radio station begins as a 100% LIVE operation, then lets see where some additional programming can come from and how to deal with/for it.

Satellite programming has become very popular these days, whether as one of the many full-time programming formats now available or as a distribution system for special programming. Not too many years ago, almost all outside programming came into the station in one of two ways. (1) Tape (2) Disc. Both of these delivery systems require a tangible element with built-in cost factors, including the cost of the tape itself, producing the recording, pressing the record and delivery. Regardless of the delivery system, most stations continue to carry one or more syndicated programs on a regular basis.

Syndicated programs should fulfill several objectives in the overall programming profile of the radio station, They are:

1. To provide information and entertainment not readily available locally
2. To enhance Sales opportunities by offering a specific program rather than the general spot sales otherwise offered via the regular format
3. To offer some staff relief by providing programming for dayparts where announcers may not be required
4. To maintain/establish relationships between the station and program suppliers

Since syndicators have the resources to put together high quality programs, the station benefits from the professional sound and in-depth information that may not otherwise be available locally.

Syndicated material is usually in one of three forms:

1. LONG FORM FORMAT

A complete format, delivered hour by hour, around the clock, usually by satellite, but often on tape for automation systems

2. LONG FORM PROGRAM

Usually from 30 minutes to 3-4 hours in length. Specific subject, music emphasis, or topic. For example weekly countdown shows, artist salutes, special holiday programming, concert specials

3. SHORT FORM PROGRAM (OR FEATURE)

Hourly, daily, or weekly feature dealing with an item or topic of specific interest, usually 2-5 minutes in length. For example: Financial news, artist profiles, consumer tips, health information, etc.

Most syndicated programs are provided on a barter basis, meaning that within each program are commercials provided by the syndicator to national advertisers. Opportunities for local sale are also available for local commercials in the show, as well. Syndicators make their money by selling national advertising, then guaranteeing to those advertisers that their message will be heard on so many station in so many markets.

It is vitally important for syndicators to be on the air with their programs in as many different markets as possible. It is also important that the station carrying the program have a significant, measurable audience in the demographics sought by the advertiser.

Although we programmers look at what we do as artistic, the purpose of all programming (especially syndicated), is to provide a means to guarantee placement of advertising dollars on radio. For this reason, most syndicators also require either an affidavit or proof of performance document to verify that the show actually ran, including the commercials.

Also, if there was ever anything that got lost in the mail, it's the affidavit forms from syndicators. A form is either included with each program, or mailed from the syndicator monthly. In any case, make a copy of each completed form for your records. You'll probably be asked for it again a few times per year. Keeping track of all those forms from every station carrying the program is a major chore for the syndicator, but very necessary for them to verify that commercials were carried.

Frequently, a syndicator will allow a station to run a syndicated program more than once. As long as the initial commercial obligation is met, the show can run again, eliminating all the network commercials and either containing all local spots, or as a commercial free program. Usually, syndicators ask for program clearance between 6am and 12 Midnight, however on programs of 3-4 hours, you can usually ask for and get permission to expand that by a few hours from 5am-1am. My syndicator friends usually don't want to hear this, but if you have a strong weekend program (a countdown, concert or featured artist type program), run it as-is Sunday morning 5am-9am, then run a commercial free version Sunday night, (or the Saturday night before in prime time, when a greater listenership is available. To my ear, most syndicated shows, especially those from major networks, are vastly over-commercial, running up to 12 spots per hour, every hour, often repeating products. I understand it from a business point of view, I just don't think it sounds good, especially when the network spots are to be followed by the local spots. In most cases, syndicators also will permit the show to be run commercial-free if the commercials themselves are played at a different time than the program, but within the allowable time-frame for broadcast.

Many stations with production talent available, get the incoming program, strip the commercials out of it, run the commercials spread out over the whole weekend, and run the program itself commercial-free or with local sponsorship only. As long as the station owns up to the commercial commitment agreed to with the syndicator, they can run the program where it will do the most good and in the most listenable form.

Most syndicated programs, especially long form, have opportunities within the program to insert local identifiers and/or promos. Even though the program is coming from an outside source and the audience is reasonably sure the show is not locally produced, make the extra effort to make the program sound as much like your station as possible.

1. Have the show's host record local breaks and promos.
2. Promote the program during other dayparts.
3. Use frequent I.D.'s during the show
4. Use recorded promos within the program to promote the next event on the air (i.e. another program, an air personality)
5. When available, obtain advance information about upcoming program content to promote specifics each week
6. Use station jingles during the program

Many syndicators want the programs returned, but most specify that the program be destroyed or kept by the station. In some cases (check with the syndicator for permission), try running a mail-in contest within the program each week and award the program itself (if on LP, Cassette, or CD) to the winner, announced within the following week's program. Generally, stations don't do enough to use syndicated programming to its greatest advantage and thereby cheat themselves out of potential ratings opportunities by not making the best effort possible to be consistent and entertaining whether live or syndicated.

For short features, the older the audience-the better acceptance. Stopping the music for a few minutes to provide informative and entertaining material is not a serious blow to the programming. Most research shows that the older listeners get, the more they seek:

- A. Relaxation
- B. Information

Before putting any feature on the air, do a little homework and make a careful assessment of the compatibility to mainstream programming. The number of 3-5 minute weekly or daily features available is astonishing. Of course, they all want to run in Drive Time.

Here's a good way to use features as a secret weapon in improving a usually dead daypart. Most syndicators, especially the small, independent guys, would rather be on the air at any time available rather than not in a market at all. Offer them placement on the all night show. Accept their programs on a non-binding month to month basis, offering them the opportunity to drop your station if they get a better affiliate (which they won't, so you're safe). Work with your all-night personality to schedule a different feature each hour all night. Let him take care of the incoming shows and affidavits. The features on money, gardening, safety, consumer news, pet care, etc, can transform an otherwise all-music all night show into almost a magazine and provide a good, informative lead-in to the AM Drive shift. Few stations effectively sell overnight, but these specific features, which may be attractive to similarly specific sponsors (at a not-to-be-believed-rate) can generate some easy money from an otherwise unprofitable daypart.

As technology has moved faster and faster, distribution of programming has become commonplace. Satellite became the media of choice for syndicators because it requires no investment in tape-LP-CD, postage, packaging, or duplicating. Therefore, the resources of local stations are required in order to record the program from satellite if it is not carried live. Satellite-distributed features or programs will only increase as distribution becomes less expensive and as syndicators look for more variety in opportunities to sell advertising to a wider spectrum of demographics that cover a broad range of subject matter. No matter how much syndicated programming it carries, a station is still supported by listeners and must retain its own identity throughout ALL programming, regardless of origin.

Chapter 41: Christmas Programming

One of the great mysteries of radio happens every holiday season. After spending thousands of dollars on music, advertising, talent, etc., most stations throw everything out the window at Christmas as they begin to infuse Christmas programming into their formats. Since it is virtually mandatory that every station participate in the holiday festivities (at the risk of being considered a Scrooge, otherwise), we may as well make the best of it. There are only a limited number of Christmas song titles, but there are usually hundreds of versions of each title. EVERYBODY in the record industry has a Christmas Album.

Let's assume that the station will follow a typical pattern of gradually playing more Christmas selections during December leading up to some sort of all day Christmas Eve-Christmas Day extravaganza.

Here is a list of Christmas ideas and tactics that work:

CHRISTMAS MUSIC

1. Packet Christmas songs by title.
2. Select the artists that belong in the station music format or can be compatible with the music format.
3. Subdivide selections into religious and non- religious titles. Save religious songs for later.
4. Classify songs by tempo, just like other music.
5. Play some Christmas songs the Friday, Saturday, and Sunday right after Thanksgiving when the holiday mood really hits everyone.
6. Go with the spirit, announce the arrivals of Santas, kick off the all promotions. Act like the station is really ready to go for the holidays...then drop it completely Monday morning (for a few weeks).

7. The audience will survive on the inertia of the post-Thanksgiving thrust and be under Christmas siege from every store, Mall, or restaurant they patronize. They also will be under promotional over-kill by some competitors who will be trying to be the Christmas Station.
8. Hold off on continuing Christmas Music play until about December 15, ten days away from the holiday or two weekends worth of shopping away from Christmas, depending upon what day of the week Christmas occurs. Since most shopping is done on the last two weekends prior to the holiday, it makes sense to be in the swing of things on those days.
9. Let competitors burn their Christmas songs too soon while you stay true to the format.
10. Probably over half of the commercial announcements will contain Christmas Music or messages, giving a de facto Christmas sound to programming anyway.
11. Create a demand by holding off. It's like seeing lines in front of the theatre. A small wait heightens the anticipation.
12. Play non-religious songs, mostly up tempo selections. Save Christmas ballads for nights.
13. Suggested music programming schedules are on the following pages.

CHRISTMAS MUSIC PROGRAMMING CALENDAR

- a. December 15-18 One song every other hour.
- b. December 18-19 One song every hour
- c. December 20 Two songs per hour (add ballads, down tempo)
- d. December 21 Three songs per hour
- e. December 22 Four songs per hour (add religious)
- f. December 23 Six songs per hour to Dec 24, 12 Noon (add non-format artists)
- g. December 24 12 Noon - 6pm All Christmas music
- h. December 24 6 pm to Christmas Day Special Programming
- i. December 25 Midnight, return to format, completely!

SPECIAL PROGRAMMING AND PROMOTIONS

1. Starting on December 15, call the station the Official Christmas Station for (city). If anyone asks who made the station the "official" Christmas station, tell them the Elves did it. That should suffice. Any Christmas sales packages or promotions should use the phrase "official Christmas station."
2. Hopefully, you have been propositioned by syndicated radio program suppliers to provide Christmas specials. You may even get a holiday version of a weekly special you already run. In any case, line up what Christmas programming you have to run from 6pm Christmas Eve to Midnight Christmas Day.
3. Open a Christmas Store on the air for an hour a day during lunchtime. Put listeners on the air looking for hard to find items and let other listeners or businesses call in with where to find them. It's a saleable holiday special daily feature.
4. Need Christmas jingles? Don't buy them. Use an existing jingle package by getting some sleigh bells (real or sound effect record) and playing them over some slow cuts from your existing package. Let a few trail out with the jingle bell sound effect (great for going into a Christmas song).
5. With so many events going on around the holidays. It's a good time to make the station very visible. Look for opportunities to participate in public gatherings. Seek the unusual. Christmas is a time of sensory overload for most people, so you need to do something very special to get noticed.
6. If you have a station vehicle, go carolling with the air staff at several locations. Use a P.A. system for singing from inside the vehicle to outdoors. Supermarket parking lots are good locations in conjunction with food drives. If you don't have a station vehicle, trade for the usage of a motor home for a week and decorate it inside and out.

PROMO: "The KTUR Carolers will be out again tonight in front of the LOTTAFOOD Market. So look and listen for the Mel's Motor Homes-KTUR Christmas Cruiser in front of the store from 7-9pm. While shopping, pick up a food item for our KTUR Salvation Army food barrel."

LOCALLY PRODUCED CHRISTMAS SPECIALS

1. Home grown specials are a saleable and clever way to program for the holidays.
3. Assign each air personality the task of doing their very own special...starring them and guests of their choice and playing their favorite music selections.
4. Also include other key station employees in the special lineup. I have heard some wonderful hour-long specials assembled by everyone from the Morning Man to the News Director to the All Night guy.
5. Since Christmas is a special holiday, this is an excellent opportunity for listeners to get to know more about the air staff.
6. Specials should be very personal and may include family, friends, written material, personal Christmas recollections, etc. Produce specials on hour-long reels of tape.
7. Use regular station formatics allowing for about 50 minutes of content, leaving time for News, weather, or commercials.
8. Consider going commercial free for the holiday with the exception of these specials which can be sold to advertisers as full sponsorships.

PROMO: "The Steve Warren Christmas Special is being brought to you by the 8th National Bank, wishing you the happiest of holiday greetings".

PROMO: "Listen for the Steve Warren Christmas Special presented by the 8th National Bank Christmas Eve at 6pm, and repeated Christmas Day at 7am and 4pm".

9. A good first place to look for potential sponsors are clients already identified with the air talent.

PROMO: "You've heard me talking every morning about how good the food is at Harry Cat's Restaurant, so join me for my very own Christmas special Christmas Eve and again Christmas Day presented by our friends at Harry Cat's".

10. Sell the sponsor open/close and three 60 second positions within the program along with a commercial/promo schedule 5-7 days before Christmas. Really get them involved with the excitement of participating in Christmas programming. Put some signs in his store advertising listening to the station and "his" sponsored special.
11. Try to locally produce a minimum of 6 specials, mostly music, each of which can be repeated for maximum exposure from evening to daytime to overnight and scheduled around other syndicated specials. Schedule specials in the same chronology as the regular air staff lineup.

12. Invest in a one-time newspaper lineup of scheduled Christmas programming. Then call attention to it on the air. Have listeners clip it out and use it as their guide for holiday listening.
13. Use every opportunity on the air for air talent to talk about, promote, cross-plug, or tease their Christmas special.

Let's say the station has a four-hour syndicated special, another three-hour syndicated special, and six homegrown specials of one-hour each. Then, here's an example schedule:

CHRISTMAS EVE

- 6pm Morning Man Christmas Special
- 7pm Midday Lady Christmas Special
- 8pm Afternoon Team Christmas Special
- 9pm Evening Guy Christmas Special
- 10pm Overnight Person Christmas Special
- 11pm News Department Christmas Special

CHRISTMAS DAY MORNING

- 12M-4am Syndicated Special #1
- 4am-7am Syndicated Special #2
- 7am Morning Man (corresponds with regular wake up AM Drive hour)
- 8am Midday Lady
- 9am Afternoon Team
- 10am Evening Guy
- 11am Overnight Person

CHRISTMAS DAY AFTERNOON/NIGHT

- 12N-4pm Syndicated Special #1
- 4pm Morning
- 5pm Midday
- 6pm Afternoon (corresponds with regular PM Drive time shift)
- 7pm Evening (corresponds with regular evening shift)
- 8pm Overnight
- 9pm-12M Syndicated Special #2

Following the holiday, get back to business as usual as soon as possible. During Christmas specials, solicit for written comments about the holiday Programming. Don't be surprised at the number of listeners who'll respond and their appreciation for the personal programming. Make a scrapbook of holiday activities to help plan next year.

Hang up the tinsel until next year. Put all basic Christmas music on cart so you always have it ready from year to year. Programming this music should/can become almost automatic rather than the typical last minute hassle.

Determine which activities were the most popular and did the most for the station. Then develop an annual approach to the station's Christmas events. Nothing enhances a station's image more than having its name associated with a positive, visible, and effective annual charity event. Not only is it genuinely good for the community and the station from a public relations point of view, it also gives an exclusive event. Competing stations will most likely under-perform at Christmas. They have to play defense by being compared to your event.

Finally...

No other annual holiday is so captivating as Christmas, so make it work for the station with promotions, sales packages, appearances, and music that make sense to the listeners and are compatible with the overall station position.

Chapter 42: Bits and Pieces - Commentary

I knew when I was preparing the Second Edition of this book that there were several issues I wanted to address, but they didn't seem to fit into any of the other chapters. In the interest of getting them down in writing and in being consistent with the expression of my feelings throughout this book, it became clear that I needed to establish a chapter just for them...and here it is. Let me just step up on this soapbox...now, where was I?

DON'T BELIEVE IN PROVERBS

Although we broadcasters often think of ourselves as great communicators, those skills often seem to go unused when there is a handy slogan, proverb, or epithet to rely on. Rather than give some serious thought to a subject worthy of consideration, we take no action based upon summing up the concept with a quick phrase. How about some of these? Ever heard them used to stop the thought process dead in its tracks?

"If it isn't broken, don't fix it."

Used to impede progress. The new version of leaving well-enough alone. Implies mediocrity and status-quo. We often hear this phrase in relation to format changes or adjustments, staff changes, music policy shifts, etc. Radio isn't about being broken or getting fixed at all, it's about adapting and moving forward. Radio stations are works in progress, a never a finished product. Sometimes we need to dismantle a product to closely examine its working parts, so:

"If it isn't broken, break it!"

To not recognize this by not being continuously responsive to market needs and industry demands is to deny radio its primary qualities of flexibility and immediacy.

Then, there's always to old standby expression:

"Where there's smoke...there's fire"!

Usually used as tacit confirmation of rumors or suspicions. Actually, a lot of times there's smoke when there's no sign of fire. And often the tiniest fire can create a huge volume of smoke. So, presume nothing.

"Where there's smoke...there's smoke!"

I'm sure you've also heard this one:

"Blood is thicker than water".

Often used in defense of relatives who may also be in the industry and to whom favoritism is shown. Actually, a lot of people don't like some of their relatives. A strong friendship or professional relationship often is more powerful than family.

So, next time someone you are working with in any department sums up the conversation with a proverb...challenge it and be prepared to offer well-thought, fact-based, discussion to move the subject beyond the proverb. As does anyone who enjoys public speaking, I like to utilize a lot of examples, parallels, and comparisons in my talks for the purpose of clarifying an issue. Yet, it is easy to diligently work at solving or resolving the example, leaving the problem to remain. So, my advice is to deal with the actual problem...not examples or comparisons.

THE PHYSICAL PLANT

A radio station can be located anywhere from a house, to office suite, to an entire building. No two are alike. Because of the technical requirements of constructing a radio station, they don't relocate too often. Moving to a new facility is always a wonderful experience...not only because the new place is exciting, but because the old place has been completely ignored in anticipation of the move. When deciding to move to a new facility, there are a few items which directly affect the Programming Department which need stating. In most cases, a radio station is a 24 hour operation. The only department that makes it a 24 hour operation is the Programming Department. All other departments keep basic office hours and are not present evenings, overnight, and weekends.

Therefore, specific needs and accommodations must be provided for the programming personnel, who may be singularly responsible for the operation of the radio station for extended periods of time, day or night all by themselves.

The first accommodation is the toilet. I cannot begin to imagine designing a new radio station without a toilet facility as close to the main studio as possible. If plumbing is not available at the part of the building where the studio is to be located, then consider re-configuring the design or add additional plumbing to accommodate the installation. There is just absolutely no excuse for designing a radio station which takes the primary operator away from the studio for any longer time than is absolutely necessary. Considering music formats, use of toilet facilities may have to occur in only two or three minutes during a musical selection. Toilet facilities in close proximity to the studio is imperative. Also, as few obstacles a possible between the toilet and the studio should also be considered -- like locking doors requiring keys or codes to re-enter. Many a dispirited announcer has, with great frustration, heard the final notes of his last song fading away on the monitors while he, having forgotten to take his key along, is locked out in the hallway, unable to re-enter the studio.

While we're addressing the needs of the air studio, Announcers and Program Directors need to have some influence in the selection of the design and function of the basic announcer environment. Frequently, studios are designed and built for the convenience of maintenance and repair, but not for convenient day-to day operation.

Here is a checklist of items to be considered when designing an effective, efficient studio:

1. Location of audio equipment at arm's reach
2. Placement of copy book
3. Space for liner cards, weather, etc.
4. Counter top space for writing (filling out logs, etc.)
5. Direct visibility to read cart or music labels when in machine (or computer screen)
6. Phone access, wires out of the way, easy to reach handset
7. Large, visible clock (both digital and analog)
8. Non-glare studio lighting, adjustable to each announcer

9. Non-heating studio lighting (spotlights look nice, but can make a studio an oven and really run up electricity usage)
10. Clearly marked control console
11. Comfortable standing surface, if stand-up operation
12. Smooth floor for rolling chair if sit-down operation
13. Individual heat/cool control thermostat for studio, independent of the rest of the building.
14. Durable, adjustable stool or chair. (Note: regular office equipment, designed for an 8 hour day, five-day week, will wear out four times faster in a 24 hour, seven-day radio studio. Be prepared to frequently replace them. Budget for several per year.)
15. Adequate, convenient storage space for music, commercials, tapes, etc.

A kitchen or some sort of food preparation area should be required at all radio stations. Whenever possible a full kitchen should be considered so the area can accommodate a range of uses for the radio station, from client parties, to food preparation during inclement weather or other station events requiring a number of staff members for long hours like election coverage or bad weather (snow) emergencies. Include a dishwasher, and real plates and dinnerware. More energy efficient, cleaner, and less likely to pile up. Care and responsibility of the kitchen should be given to an employee as part of their job duties. Usually, there actually is someone on staff who would look to the care of the eating area as a point of personal pride.

Access to a window or some view outside. There is just something about actually being able to see the weather as it happens, or experience the season to make a studio more pleasant and stimulating. Perhaps the studio may not have it's own window, but maybe across the hall or through an open partition or glass door nearby, a peek at what's happening outside can translate into a more effective relationship between the listener and the announcer as they experience the climate and mood together.

Chapter 43: In Conclusion

There you have it! I'd like to say that this book is finished...but a book on radio can never be finished because our medium is changing daily. Although its technology seems to move with the swiftest current, advances in equipment and facilities still remain only tools in the hands of those given the responsibility and authority to program radio stations. Rarely does technology contribute to radio station success. Creativity, persistence, and direction always do. The basics of programming a radio station haven't really changed very much. Internally, we still deal with personalities, systems, budgets, temperaments, and deadlines. Externally, we still have to "sell our act" to the audience in measurable numbers by paying attention to their needs and by persuasion or cleverness.

The radio industry is changing very rapidly. Now that duopoly and multiple ownership is a reality. The rules are vastly different and the playing field a bit less even now that a single company can own literally hundreds of radio stations. Throughout the book, I have referred to the changing face of the radio industry, not only in the United States, but also worldwide. Commercial radio is becoming commonplace globally, with many countries finding their entrance into commercial broadcasting difficult and risky while others reap vast success. Regardless of where radio is being broadcast, the undisputable truth remains that:

"IT'S ALL ABOUT THE LISTENER"

So wherever a radio station is on the evolutionary scale, the need to bond with the listeners is an imperative. So while the rest of the broadcasting universe swirls around our heads in dizzying proportions, I'll stick by some very basic issues that deal with how and why Programming will still be the primary device for the development of successful radio.

When I first began to put my programming notes on paper in 1987, I started to see some trends developing as I worked on-site at a series of stations, and as I consulted dozens of others. Many of the same questions were always being asked as the problems and concerns seemed to repeat themselves from market to market. I never for a moment believed there would be any standard answers for every problem that came up, but I started to get the idea that by having at hand some thought provoking ideas, individual creativity would kick-in and new solutions could be found.

By turning away momentarily from the problem, and reviewing some solution options, whether by reading them or talking to other programmers, I always felt more confident in developing a solution. It is my hope that the efforts in putting together this manual will trigger some ideas from within its readers. Each solution, system, or idea, whether it be mine or yours, will become a new building block for those looking to us as examples. Those building blocks will also strengthen our own individual knowledge of our business and become a permanent part of our mental filing system.

The best application for this book is as a companion. Keep it in your office or close at hand. Don't try to memorize every subject. When a situation comes up, reach for it to see if somewhere within these pages is something that can assist your own creative style and intuition. YOU have the responsibility for solving the problems at YOUR radio station. So regardless of where the ideas come from, you'll get the credit for them if you are successful.

Now that you've finished this book, take a break, share it with a friend, let it sit on the desk for a week or so, then each week, pick it up for a few minutes to see if there are some immediate applications to your current circumstances. Some of the gimmicks I use like the liner card file box or music scheduling cards or the Christmas Carol script I have available for ordering in the Forms Section to follow. Of course, I'm always eager to hear your ideas, see your systems, and applaud your solutions.

Then, let this book serve as an introduction of each of us to the other. Welcome into my growing circle of friends. New friends sharing our exciting experiences in this business called RADIO.

Chapter 44: The Forms Section

Paperwork will always be a part of our business. To facilitate tracking various operations, standard forms are a convenient and consistent way to document activities. Here are some of the basic forms required for many typical station functions. Where necessary for explanation, following each blank form (which MAY be duplicated for individual station use), I've included a filled-in sample. There's also space on each form for a station LOGO to add that custom touch to the forms that you select for your use.

The forms included in this section are:

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AIR SHIFT SCHEDULE

FOR THE WEEK OF: _____

TIME	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
12A-6A							
6A-10A							
10A-3P							
3P-7P							
7P-12A							

SPECIAL PROGRAMS

SPORTS

REMOTES

FEATURES

AIR SHIFT SCHEDULE

FOR THE WEEK OF: January 4, 1993

TIME	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
12A-6A	BOB	BOB	BOB	BOB	BOB	SAM	GERT
6A-10A	STEVE	STEVE	STEVE	STEVE	STEVE	JEFF	SAM
10A-3P	CAROL	CAROL	CAROL	CAROL	CAROL	CAROL	JEFF
3P-7P	MARK	MARK	MARK	MARK	MARK	MARK	PETE
7P-12A	ROB	ROB	SAM**	SAM**	SAM**	PETE	BIFF

SPECIAL PROGRAMS

SPORTS Fleas vs. Bugs Sat 7:30pm

REMOTES Carol "House of Roofing" Sat 10-3

FEATURES New Years Resolution promotion all week.

** ROB Vacation

SALES COMMERCIAL ORDER

Account Executive: _____ Today's Date: ___/___/___

Tape Provided Copy Provided Need ___ Spot(s) Written

Spec Copy Needed For Client Approval By: _____ AM PM ___/___/___

Copy Start Date: ___/___/___ Copy End Date: ___/___/___ Cart #: _____

Client: _____

Location: _____

Contact: _____ Phone Number: _____

Spot Length: :30 :60 Needed By: _____ AM PM ___/___/___

Rotation Information: 100% Even Other _____

Spot Tone: Serious Humorous Light Hard

Spot Tempo: Fast Medium Slow

Announcer: Male Female Either Multi-Voice

COPY INFORMATION

Slogan/Catch Phrase: _____

Central Theme: _____

Objective: _____

ATTACH ANY ADDITIONAL COPY FACTS!

BELOW IS FOR PRODUCTION USE ONLY!

Copy Received: _____ AM PM ___/___/___

Copy Finished: _____ AM PM ___/___/___

Comments: _____

PRODUCTION ROOM SCHEDULE

FOR THE WEEK OF: _____

TIME	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
12:00 AM							
1:00 AM							
2:00 AM							
3:00 AM							
4:00 AM							
5:00 AM							
6:00 AM							
7:00 AM							
8:00 AM							
9:00 AM							
10:00 AM							
11:00 AM							
12:00 PM							
1:00 PM							
2:00 PM							
3:00 PM							
4:00 PM							
5:00 PM							
6:00 PM							
7:00 PM							
8:00 PM							
9:00 PM							
10:00 PM							
11:00 PM							

PRODUCTION ROOM SCHEDULE

FOR THE WEEK OF: 7-20-92

Initials or
name of
person s
assigned.

TIME	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
12:00 AM	AL	AL	AL	AL	AL		
1:00 AM							
2:00 AM							
3:00 AM						Sports	ENG. maint.
4:00 AM						↓	↓
5:00 AM	Stew	Stew	Stew	Stew	Stew		
6:00 AM						↓	↓
7:00 AM	Tom	Tom	Tom	Tom	Tom	↓	
8:00 AM	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓		Church
9:00 AM	BILL	↓				Jim	Tapes
10:00 AM	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓
11:00 AM	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓
12:00 PM	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓
1:00 PM	News Watch	↓	↓	↓	Cooking with Sherry		
2:00 PM	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓		
3:00 PM	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓		
4:00 PM	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓		
5:00 PM	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓		
6:00 PM	Traffic	→				Request Show	
7:00 PM	News	News	News	News	News	↓	↓
8:00 PM							
9:00 PM							
10:00 PM						↓	↓
11:00 PM							

Long show tape

Department use

Blank spaces indicate open studio. Post this schedule several weeks in advance on Production Room Door. Fill-in in Pencil so changes or swaps can be noted

Commercial Production Order (Alternate)

MUST BE COMPLETED: DAY Wed DATE 7-22-92 TIME 9AM
 START DATE: DAY Fri DATE 7-24-92 TIME 6AM
 END DATE: DAY Fri DATE 7-31-92 TIME 9PM
 NEW SPOTS(S) RE-DO AUTHORIZED BY lew
 CLIENT/LABEL TITLE: Bob's Bait
 NUMBER OF SPOTS & LENGTH: 20 @ :60 @ :30 _____ @ :10

TAPE NUMBER #526 CUT NUMBERS 1, 7, 8

CART #	CUT/COPY INSTRUCTIONS
412	Worms
413	Cheese
414	Hooks

OTHER INFORMATION

MASTER NEEDED?
 --YES-- --NO--

CASSETTE NEEDED?
 --YES-- --NO--

BOX LABEL INFORMATION

DUBS NEEDED FOR
KRM-FM
WTL-AM

VOICED BY Steve DATE _____
 DATE COMPLETED 7-23-92 BY Rob
 MUSIC USED La Mer
 COMMENTS Mid-Season Sale

COMMERCIAL COPY

LENGTH: :60 _____ :30 _____ :10 _____
DATE: ___/___/___ START DATE: ___/___/___ NEED BY: ___/___/___
ACCOUNT: _____ WRITER: _____

PRODUCTION	COPY
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	
6.	
7.	
8.	
9.	
10.	
11.	
12.	
13.	
14.	
15.	
16.	
17.	
18.	
19.	
20.	

Commercial Copy

DATE: 7/22/92 START DATE: 7/27/92 NEED BY: 7/25/92

ACCOUNT: Tower of London WRITER: SW

PRODUCTION	COPY
SFX Pouring	1. Ever wanted a great cup of tea in
2. Music "God save the	the middle of the afternoon, then
Queen"	you should go to the TOWER OF
3.	LONDON tea shop next time that tea
4.	thirst strikes.
SFX: Big Ben	5. So when it's tea time at your
strikes three	place, come on over to our place
6.	for a touch of Merry Old England
7.	at the TOWER OF LONDON Tea Shop.
8.	Located in the Baker Street Mall
9.	in the food court.
10.	One lump or two?
SFX: Plop plop	11.
12.	12.
13.	13.
14.	14.
15.	15.
16.	16.
17.	17.
18.	18.
19.	19.
20.	20.

CONTEST DESCRIPTION:	GIVEAWAY DATE/TIME:
----------------------	---------------------

INSTRUCTIONS:

HOUR	NAME	ADDRESS CITY-STATE-ZIP	HOME & WORK NUMBERS	SS NUMBER	BIRTH DATE & AGE
			(H) (W)		

VALUE OF PRELIMINARY PRIZE: \$ _____ VALUE OF GRAND PRIZE: \$ _____

CONTEST DESCRIPTION: Ring Around the Hole Donut Shop 2 Dozen Donuts Giveaway	GIVEAWAY DATE/TIME: 7-27-8/28
--	--------------------------------------

INSTRUCTIONS:

Listen for the sound of the dunking donut and be the 10th caller.

HOUR	NAME	ADDRESS CITY-STATE-ZIP	HOME & WORK NUMBERS	SS NUMBER	BIRTH DATE & AGE
6am	Steve Warren	MOR Media	(H) 555-5111 (W)	xxx-xxxx	98
			(H) (W)		

VALUE OF PRELIMINARY PRIZE: \$ \$5.00 VALUE OF GRAND PRIZE: \$ _____

TIME OFF REQUEST

NAME: _____ DATE: _____

STATION: _____ DEPARTMENT: _____

REQUESTED DAYS: _____

CHARGE TO: VACATION PERSONAL UNPAID LEAVE

VACATION DAYS ACCRUED: _____ VACATION DAYS USED TO DATE: _____

PERSONAL DAYS ALLOWED: _____ PERSONAL DAYS USED: _____

VACATION DAYS REQUESTED IN ADVANCE: _____

I AUTHORIZE THE COMPANY TO WITHHOLD COMPENSATION FOR ALL VACATION DAYS USED IN ADVANCE AND NOT ACCRUED PRIOR TO MY LEAVING THE COMPANY FROM MY FINAL PAYCHECK.

EMPLOYEE SIGNATURE: _____ DATE: _____

MANAGER APPROVAL: _____ DATE: _____

TIME OFF REQUEST

NAME: Steve Warrner DATE: 2-21-97

STATION: WPTR-FM DEPARTMENT: Program

REQUESTED DAYS: May 1-7

CHARGE TO: VACATION PERSONAL UNPAID LEAVE

VACATION DAYS ACCRUED: 14 VACATION DAYS USED TO DATE: 6

PERSONAL DAYS ALLOWED: 3 PERSONAL DAYS USED: 0

VACATION DAYS REQUESTED IN ADVANCE: 6

I AUTHORIZE THE COMPANY TO WITHHOLD COMPENSATION FOR ALL VACATION DAYS USED IN ADVANCE AND NOT ACCRUED PRIOR TO MY LEAVING THE COMPANY FROM MY FINAL PAYCHECK

EMPLOYEE SIGNATURE: [Signature] DATE: 2-2-97

MANAGER APPROVAL: _____ DATE: _____

DISCREPANCY REPORT

DAY: Tuesday

TIMES: ET

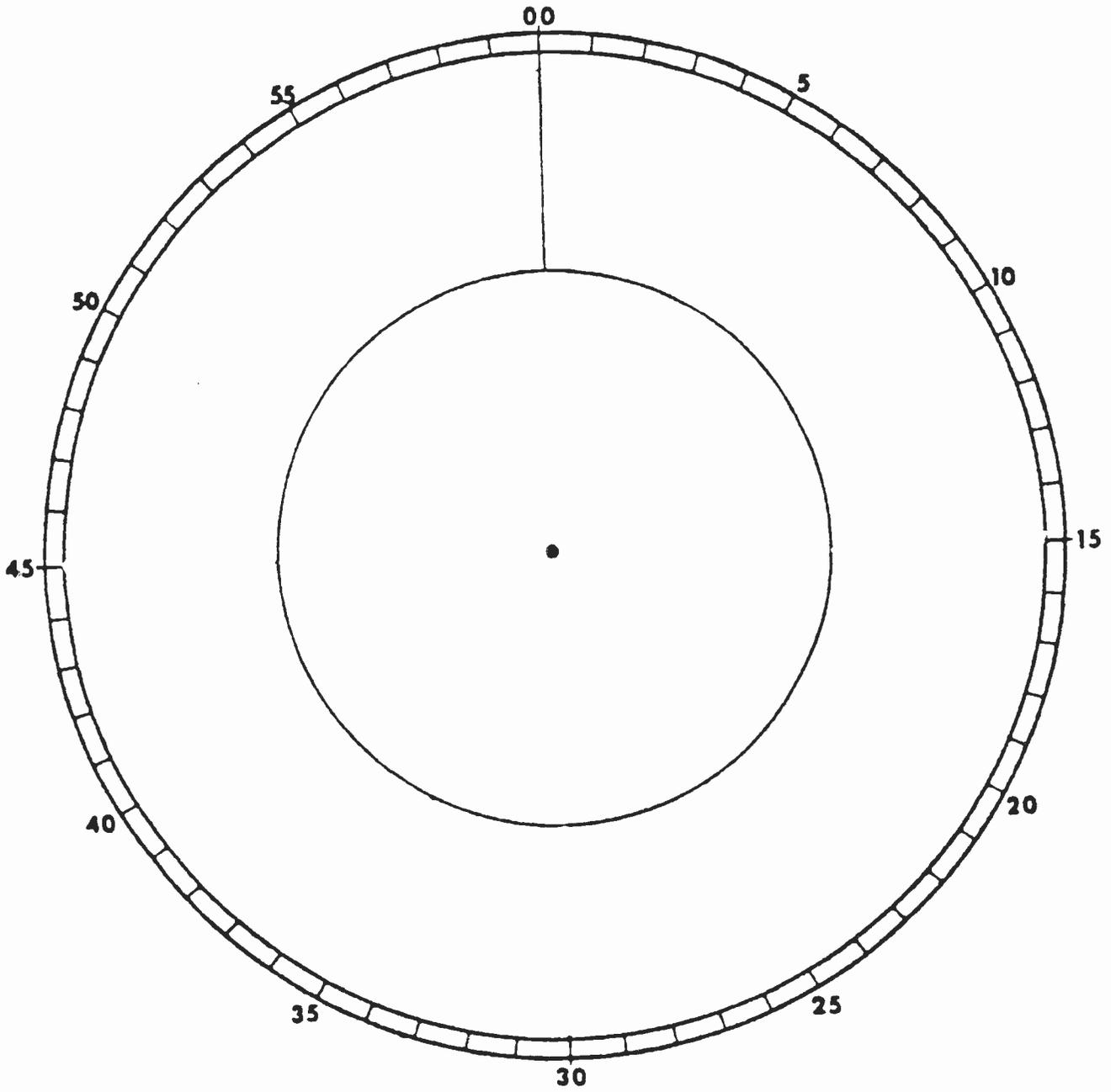
DATE: 5-19-92

TIME	CART #	CLIENT/PROGRAM NAME	PROBLEM	ACTION	INITIAL
4 AM	"A"	May Promo	MISSING	—	AP
6:26A	426	Big Al's	Outdated	Rec'd #427	SW
10:15 AM	512	Jeff's Jeeps	Not Rec'd	Played at 10:45	Old
10:55A	"A"	May Promos	still missing	—	see
2-3:30p	NET	Newsfeed	Poor Quality	Told News	see
4:15p	124	Pete's Eats Cafe	Machine ate cart	Redubbed Played 5:35	see
7:40p	512	Jeff's Jeeps	still not cured cart bad	Redubbed after 12:41	see
9:55 pm	SONG- D-417	Big Sam's Boogie	Runs slow Distortion	Gave to P.D.	see

EMERGENCY PHONE NUMBERS

_____	Traffic Manager	_____ - _____
_____	Program Director	_____ - _____
_____	Production Director	_____ - _____
_____	General Manager	_____ - _____
_____	Sales Manager	_____ - _____
_____	Engineer	_____ - _____

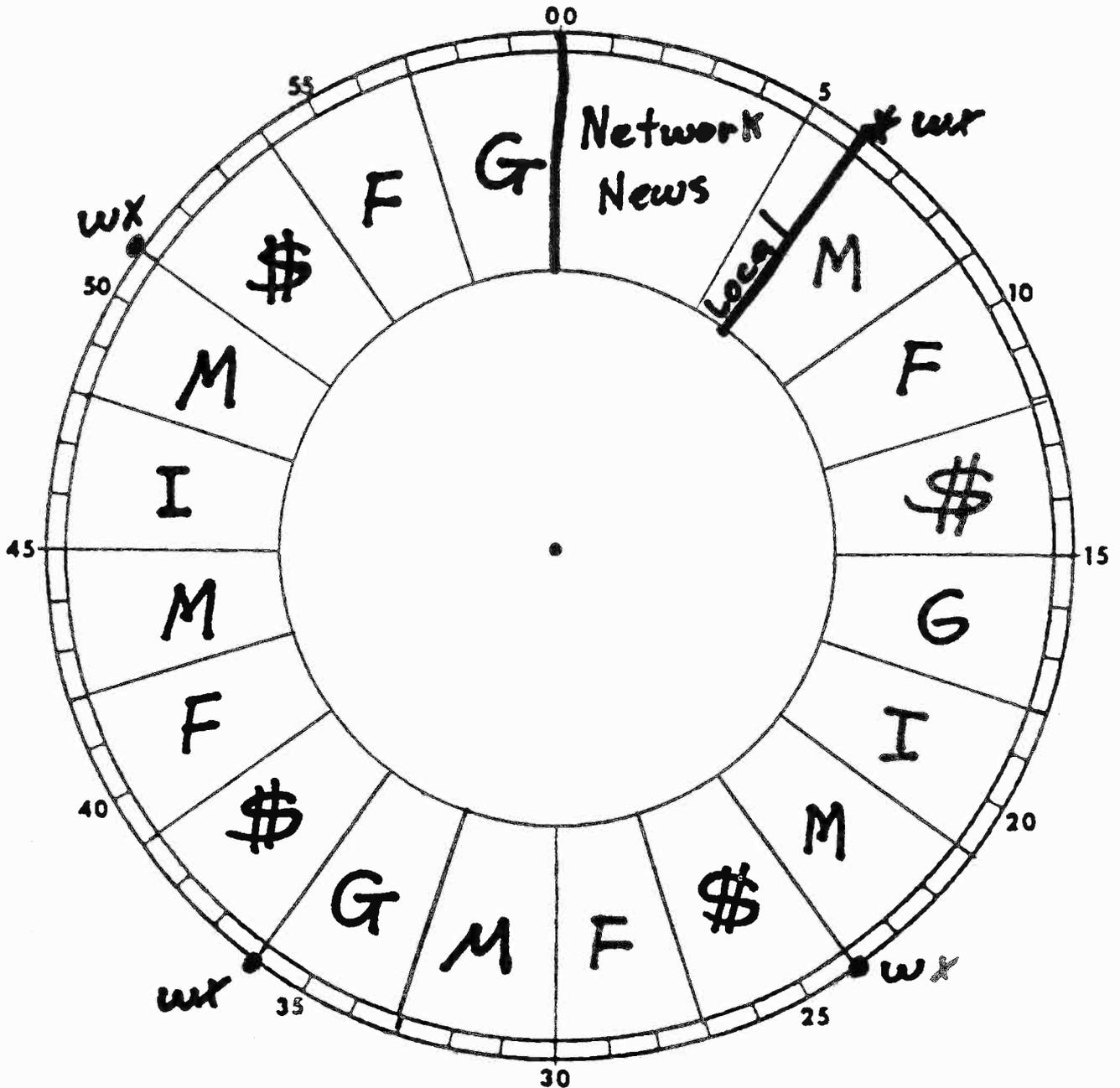
FORMAT CLOCK



Even Days

10 AM - 3 PM

M-F



Use the blank clockface to design your own music and commercial schedule positions. Consider different clocks for different dayparts and days of the week. Here's an example from a MOR Station.

M=Male

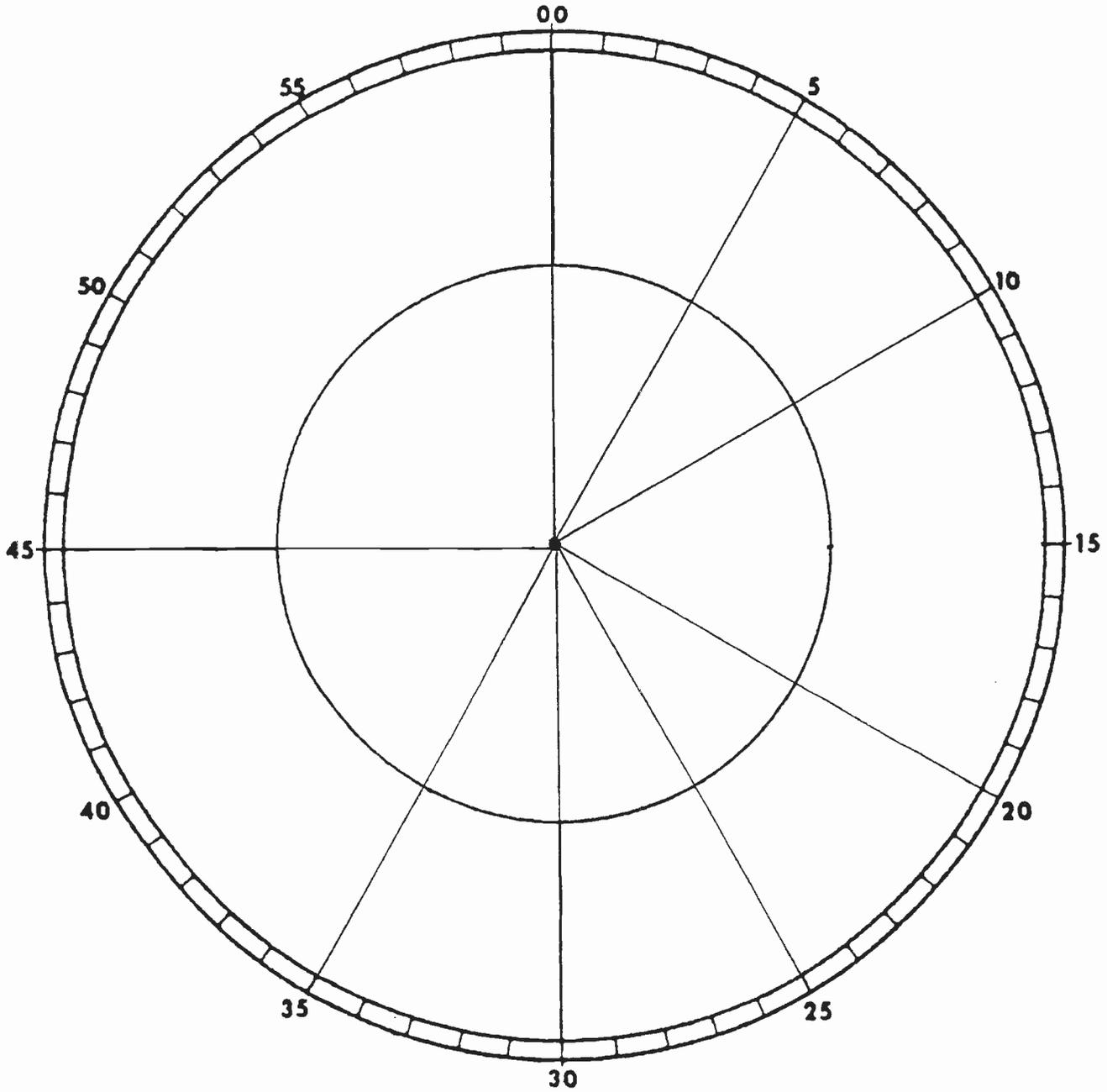
F=Female

G=Group

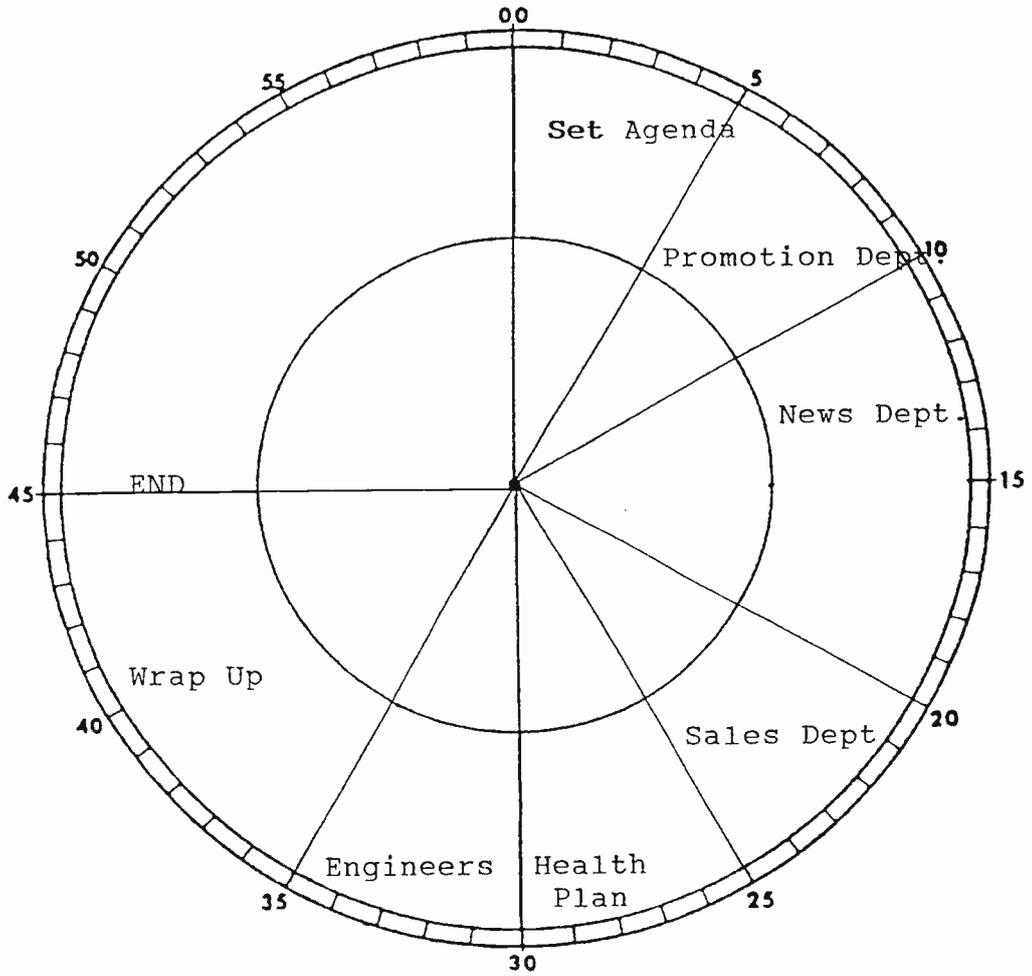
I=Instrumental

\$=Stopsets

MEETING AGENDA CLOCK



Meeting Agenda Clock



INVOICE FOR PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENTS

RADIO STATION (logo)

Date _____

During the time period from _____ to _____

Radio Station (call) _____ broadcast (number) _____

of Public Service Announcements for the benefit of:

(Agency Name and Address)

The total value of these announcements (had they been paid for at our present advertising rates) would be (Amount) _____ dollars.

DO NOT PAY! These announcements were donated in the Public Interest by (call)

Very sincerely,

Public Service Director

INVOICE FOR PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENTS

RADIO STATION (logo)

Date March 4 1997

During the time period from Feb. 1 to Feb 28

Radio Station (call) WPTR broadcast (number) 20

of Public Service Announcements for the benefit of:

Fireman's (Agency Name and Address)

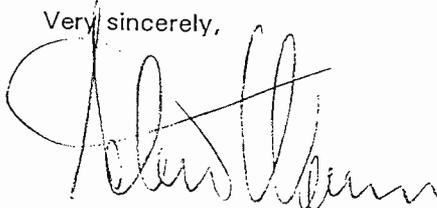
P.O. Box 2718

Smithdale NY

The total value of these announcements (had they been paid for at our present advertising rates) would be (Amount) 400 dollars.

DO NOT PAY! These announcements were donated in the Public Interest by (call)

Very sincerely,



Public Service Director

PUBLIC SERVICE ACTIVITY FORM

Use this form to document any/all activities, appearances, remotes, guest appearances, or contests conducted with the purpose of promoting the cause of a worthy public service organization. Fill in all applicable information completely and accurately, as this form will be submitted to our station's Public File with the FCC. Thanks!

Submitted By: _____ Date(s)/Time(s) of event: _____

Sponsoring Organization: _____ Contact name/number: _____

Name of Event: _____

Check all that apply:

I attended the event.
 (So did other staff members: _____)

We did a live broadcast. Date/Times: _____

_____ promoted this event _____ times:
 Live reads (white card)
 Recorded promo

_____ was a co-sponsor of the event
 Other media sponsors involved were _____

_____ logo appeared on promotional material used by the sponsoring organization.
Please attach.

_____ from the sponsoring organization was invited to come on the
air on _____ (date/time) to talk about the event.

The station received publicity or acknowledgement for the event. (Please attach copies.)

Please include any additional notes pertinent to the event here:

Signed: _____ Date: _____

PUBLIC SERVICE ACTIVITY FORM

Use this form to document any/all activities, appearances, remotes, guest appearances, or contests conducted with the purpose of promoting the cause of a worthy public service organization. Fill in all applicable information completely and accurately, as this form will be submitted to our station's Public File with the FCC. Thanks!

Submitted By: Steve Warner Date(s)/Time(s) of event: 2/12/97

Sponsoring Organization: YMCA Contact name/number: Al Smith

Name of Event: Walk for Health

Check all that apply:

I attended the event.
 (So did other staff members: Bob J.)

We did a live broadcast. Date/Times: No

WPTV promoted this event _____ times:
 Live reads (white card)
 Recorded promo

WPTV was a co-sponsor of the event
 Other media sponsors involved were WPTV-TV

_____ logo appeared on promotional material used by the sponsoring organization.
Please attach.

Jeroy Fleun from the sponsoring organization was invited to come on the air on 2-9-97 (date/time) to talk about the event.

The station received publicity or acknowledgement for the event. (Please attach copies.)

Please include any additional notes pertinent to the event here:

Newsletter attached

Signed: [Signature]

Date: 2-14-97

342 Title: I Luv You Porky

Artist: Gstaad Philharmonic orchestra

Intro: :14 Time: 3:24 End: Cold Tempo: 4

7/29 3pm	8/4 9AM	10/11 4pm	10/19 3pm	11/04 12N	11/22 6pm	12/9 5p
12/27 3A	1/4 6A					

Sample music scheduling card. Duplicate the blank form provided (you can get 2 per page) and have printed on various colors of card stock (5x8).

Write-in times song is played (Date and/or Hour) either horizontally or vertically. Avoid playing song in same hour and allow # of days separation.

MOR MEDIA
INFORMATION AND MERCHANDISE ORDER FORM
 (you may want to make copies of this form before writing on the book copy)

Check all
that apply

YES! Send me more information about:

Steve Warren's Consulting Services	<input type="checkbox"/>
The "Country Oldies Show" weekly syndicated radio program	<input type="checkbox"/>
The "Great Entertainers" Music Service	<input type="checkbox"/>
"Radio Programming Survival Course" (for your staff or group)	<input type="checkbox"/>

Or call 1-800-827-1722, Monday through Friday from 8am to 6pm (EST).

Yes! I would like to order:

QUANTITY	ITEM	PRICE	TOTAL
	Plexiglas Liner Card Box	\$55	
	PSA/Promo Box Rubber Stamp	\$10	
	"A Christmas Carol" Radio Script	\$45	
	Music Scheduling Cards (White)	\$9 per 100	
	Music Scheduling Cards (Blue)	\$9 per 100	
	Music Scheduling Cards (Yellow)	\$9 per 100	
	Music Scheduling Cards (Pink)	\$9 per 100	
TOTAL AMOUNT ENCLOSED:			<input type="text"/>

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State/Country: _____ Zip: _____

Company or Radio Station Name: _____

Office Phone: _____ FAX: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Credit Card Number: _____ Expiration Date: _____

AMEX VISA MasterCard JCB (circle one)

FAX your requests and/or orders to MOR Media at 518-783-7988. All basic domestic shipping and delivery costs will be paid by MOR Media. Express service available. If paying by check or money order, make payable to MOR MEDIA and send to:

MOR MEDIA ORDER DEPARTMENT • P.O. BOX 96 • LATHAM, NY 12110



3858

Price: \$29.95

EACH

DESC. RADIO THE BOOK 2ND ED.

Item #3858